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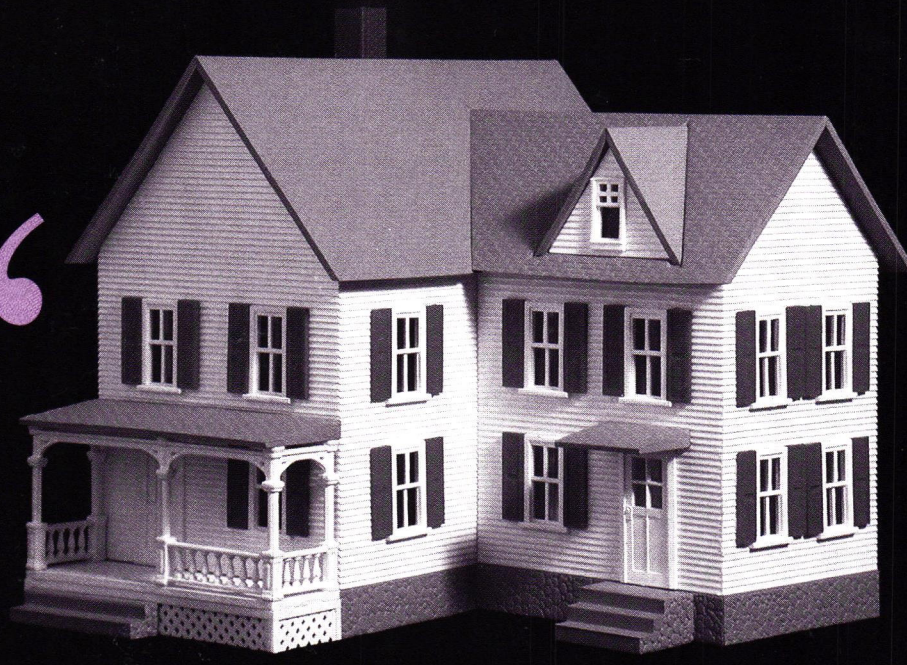

"small towns"

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Comment

The quotation marks around "small towns" on the cover may suggest that we are using the term loosely. We are. As you'll see, smallness can be relative: compared to the Bay Area and Los Angeles metropolises, Santa Cruz is small. We include, as well, urban neighborhoods—such as San Francisco's Glen Park—that function much like small towns. And, yielding to popular demand, we are reprinting an essay on planning in the not-small-at-all city of Cape Town, South Africa, which was a big hit at last year's Monterey Design Conference.

In his essay on Los Banos, **arcCA** editorial board member Paul Halajian, AIA, notes that, "as designers of the built environment, we tend to follow trends established in the highly populated metropolitan areas, forgetting that California is largely rural." Not to mention largely large. Seeking to diversify our perspectives on the state, the editorial board has worked hard to draw new members from outside the SF-LA shuttle hop. Paul, who hails from Fresno, was the first such newcomer. He has been joined this year by Kris Miller-Fisher, AIA, of Santa Barbara, and Eric Naslund, FAIA, of San Diego. We welcome them—and San Francisco sage, Peter Dodge, FAIA, too. (I make a particular point of mentioning these folks, as we rather bungled the editorial board roster—indeed, the entire masthead—in 04.1, "press check." Please see this issue's masthead for correct listings of current editorial board members and AIACC officers.)

This being an election year, in the interest of full disclosure (a practice for which we could use more examples), I should mention that I was involved in two projects discussed in this issue: the Glen Park Marketplace, whose saga is told by developer David Prowler; and one of the Santa Cruz ADUs described by Bruce Race, FAIA. Both are projects of Peterson Architects, the San Francisco firm that for four years has generously donated office space and support for **arcCA.** Alongside my editorial work, I've been employed both by Peterson Architects and by Public Architecture, the non-profit, public interest firm that it is incubating (*www.publicarchitecture.org*). Not trusting myself to judge the aptness of these projects for the "small towns" issue, I asked members of the editorial board to review them, and they assure me the subjects are of interest. (Or, to put it again in terms of the election year: the buck stops just shy of my desk.)

A further resource for those interested in small towns is the Carl Small Town Center in the College of Architecture at Mississippi State University (*http://smalltown.coa.msstate.edu/index.html*). Take a peek. ◉

Tim Culvahouse, AIA, editor

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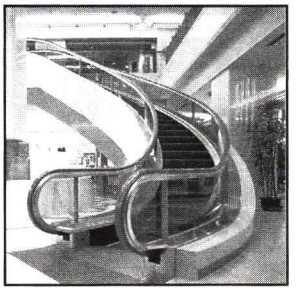
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Contributors

David Dewar holds a BP chair in City and Regional Planning in the School of Architecture, Planning, and Geomatics and is deputy-head of the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment at the University of Cape Town. An outspoken critic of apartheid policies, he was co-founder and director of the Urban Problems Research Unit. He is author or co-author of nine books and over 220 articles and monographs on urban and regional development. He consults widely in Southern Africa and Mauritius on issues relating to urban and regional planning and development. From 1999 to 2001, he was a member of the National Development and Planning Commission (the first planning-related commission in South Africa for over 60 years), charged with drafting a Green Paper on the Planning System in South Africa. In 2000-2001, he was core consultant for a Spatial Development Framework for the City of Cape Town. He has received numerous professional awards in planning and architecture.

Paul N. Halajian, AIA, is a principal of The Taylor Group Architects of Fresno, California. He holds a Masters Degree from UC Berkeley and is currently serving on the editorial board of arcCA. After working in the San Francisco office of EHDD Architects, he returned to the San Joaquin Valley to become actively involved in the urban and architectural transformation occurring in the region. His practice is currently working on a number of public libraries and university projects throughout the Valley as well as master plans for revitalization of downtown residential neighborhoods in Fresno.

David Prowler was the City of San Francisco's Project Manager for Pacific Bell Ballpark and Mission Bay. Now a developer and development consultant, he can be reached at *David@Prowler.org*.

Bruce A. Race, FAIA, AICP, specializes in community-based urban design. He assisted the Town of Minden and Douglas County Nevada in preparing the Minden Plan for Prosperity and helped the City of Santa Cruz prepare the Accessory Dwelling Unit manual and facilitate community workshops. His firm, RACESTUDIO, is located in Berkeley.

Jeffrey A. Scherer, FAIA, is a founding partner with Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle, Ltd, in Minneapolis. He is past president of Minnesota AIA and the Library Foundation of Hennepin County, vice-chair of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts Paintings Council, and serves on the Americans for Libraries Council in New York. He has specialized in library programming, community building, technology, and design since 1977.

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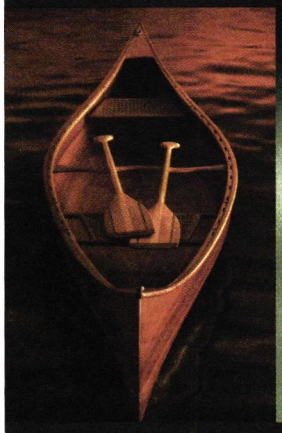

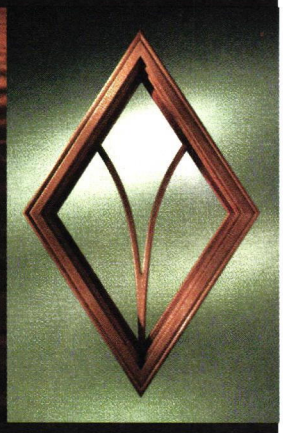

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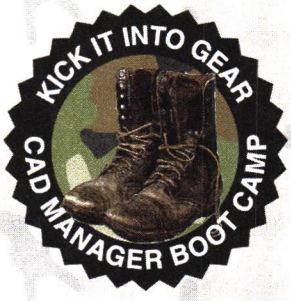

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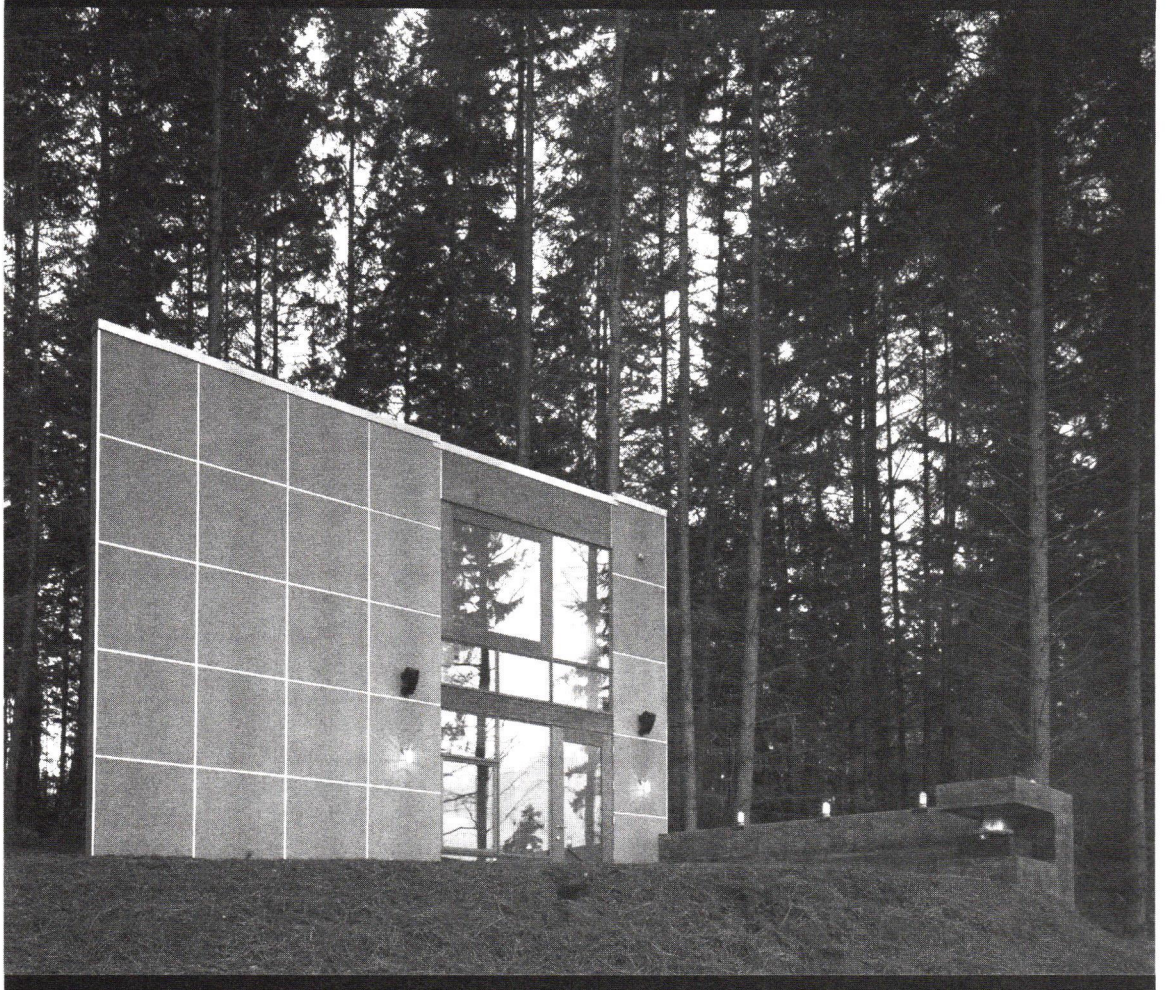

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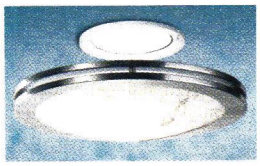

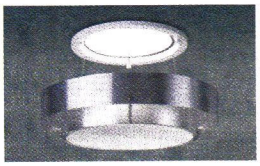

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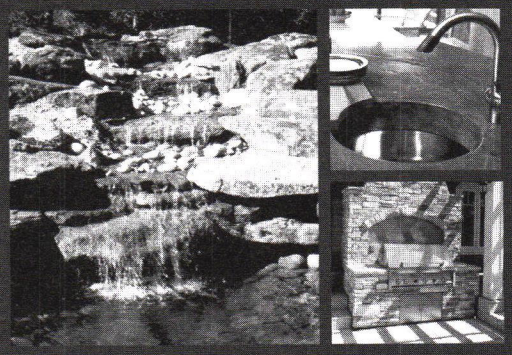

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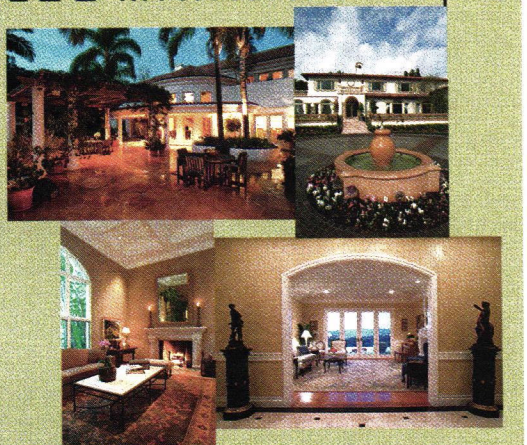

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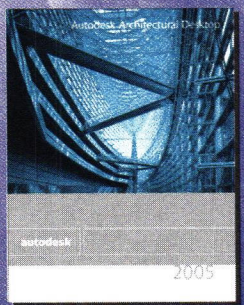

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A town's trust in the attitude,

talent, and compassion

of the library architect is crucial

to the process of creating

this lasting and essential building

for its community.

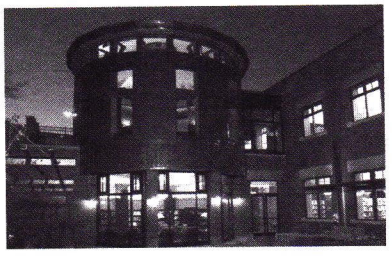
The Architect, The Library, and The Community

Jeffrey A. Scherer, FAIA

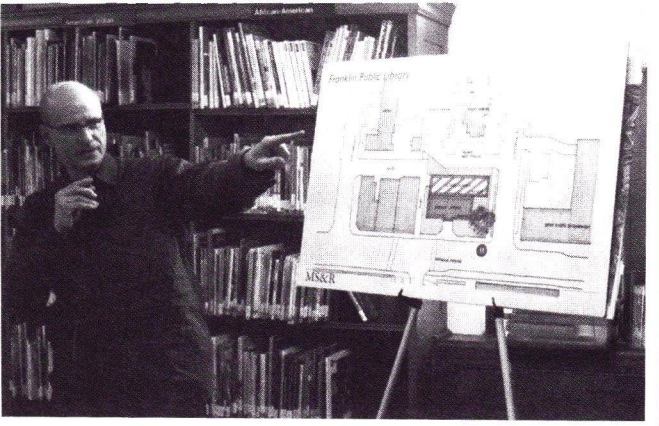
The design and construction of a new library, in any sized community, is an act of building social and educational capital. Today, patrons are rediscovering that libraries can be, as I refer to them, community-based learning palaces. Similar to the explosion of library construction at the turn of the 20th century, communities across the United States are building new libraries. *Library Journal* reports that in 2003, 4,066,276 square feet of new or renovated public libraries were built in the United States. There are 8,991 library systems in the U.S. (ranging from one library to a city/county-wide system). A town's trust in the attitude, talent, and compassion of the library architect is crucial to the process of creating this lasting and essential building for its community.

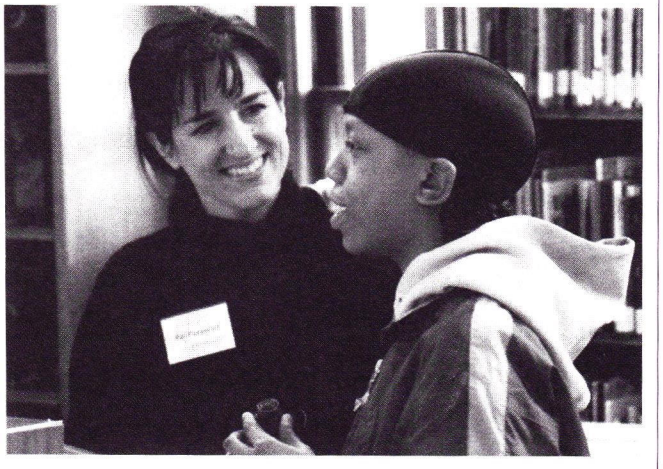
Libraries are being conceived and realized as distinctive places for individual user groups, designed with retailing techniques in mind, constructed to enhance the experience for young and old alike, and being made extremely flexible and energy conservative. As stated by Dr. Alan Bundy, University Librarian, University of South Australia, "After all, the most enduring and flexible learning institution is the library—organized for well over two millennia and predating the first universities and schools by well over one millennium—to provide self-paced and self-selected transmission of knowledge."

Social capital, as defined by James Coleman, Pierre



above and facing page: Wilkinson Library, Telluride, Colorado





above: Franklin Library Public Meeting

Bordieu, and others, "is essentially the network of linkages, trust and bonds within a society that allow an individual to operate within a society that accrues advantages to that individual." Successful libraries are responsive to their communities—creating services that are specifically tailored to their needs. As institutions, they are reasserting themselves as essential centers of learning and community exchange by creating this social capital in an intellectual marketplace. The size of a town or marketplace is defined by library systems as the population served per outlet. In California, 980 public library outlets (including branches, main libraries or bookmobiles) serve 33,000,000 people, for an average of 33,673 people per outlet.

As the intellectual heart and soul of a community, a library supplies the blood and nutrients specifically through its services. As defined by Amitai Etzioni in *The Monochrome Society:* "Community [has] two attributes: first, a web of affect-laden relationships that encompass a group of individuals—relationships that crisscross and reinforce one another, rather than simply a chain of one-on-one relationships . . . . This attribute will be referred to as bonding. Second, communities require a measure of commitment to a set of shared values, mores, and meanings and shared historical identity—in short, a culture."

The library is at the heart of a social network that builds trust within the town through education. Besides informing its citizenry, it breaks down barriers and opens opportunities for communication. The public library remains one of the few places where people of all ages and backgrounds convene. As Lewis Lapham, Chair, Americans for Libraries Council, has said, "The security of the nation depends on knowledge and community; the library gives us both." The library serves as the main institution that can facilitate community building and the creation of social capital.

In *Bowling Alone,* Robert Putnam writes that it is necessary for us to transcend our social, political, and professional identities to connect with people unlike ourselves. Libraries encourage these connections through their collections and the way they serve their communities. They also operate on many levels simultaneously. They can be meeting places, learning resources, and comfortable rooms to relax alone or visit with a friend, meet a group, teach a child, learn a new skill, research a stock or business, write a resume, find a car to buy, or pick up a form. The library and its programs can help reconcile competing interests within a community. In *Better Together,* Putnam notes that the Chicago Public Library "thrives today because it embodies a new idea of how a library functions. No longer a passive repository of books and information or an outpost of culture, quiet, and decorum in a noisy world, the new library is an active and responsive part of the community and an agent of change." The design of the new Rancho Mirage Public Library, for example, creates spaces for concerts, outdoor activities, interpretive native plant gardens, and senior-friendly seating areas.

The duality of bonding and culture, as defined by Etzioni, fits well with what can be achieved in a town library. For example, the Bowling Green, Kentucky Public Library cre-

ated a digital branch in a historic train depot. Many of the neighborhood children and adults who visit the library do not have the disposable income to enjoy the national upsurge in technological connectivity. This small branch is their primary technological link to the world. It is creating a wonderful mixing pot where people of different ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds are coming together for the first time. Since the library's opening, crime has dropped and people are visiting the neighborhood, once thought of as off-limits because of its high crime rate.

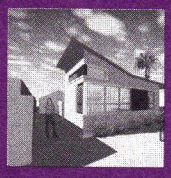
A well conducted public process can jump start a community's trust in the architect. It can also expedite the development of trust among stakeholders, which can in turn help create linkages and social capital in the community. The architect is in a unique position to help build these linkages. For example, our architecture firm—Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle (MS&R), based in Minneapolis—has conducted over 750 workshops over the past 22 years in more than 100 communities across the country, using the following processes to guide us through the library building process:

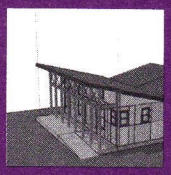
- Using an architectural "Rorschach test"—showing from 100-200 library buildings from around the world—in public meetings. This exercise enables the architect to quickly discover the "aesthetic preferences" of a community. In such tests conducted by MS&R, the top vote getter for favorite building is the Academy of Arts and Science in Cambridge, Massachusetts, by Kallmann, McKinnell and Woods Architects.
- Creating a top-ten list of descriptive words from cards handed out at community meetings. The top-ten words from meetings that MS&R has facilitated with communities across the country are: 1) safe, 2) convenient, 3) comfortable, 4) warm, 5) inviting, 6) technology, 7) selection, 8) accessible, 9) rich in resources, and 10) meeting place. What stands out is the universality of community aspirations, from Delaware to Oklahoma to California. Skillfully interpreting these words into architectural meaning is one of the architect's creative responsibilities.
- Meeting with children and teenagers after school. In 1995, there were 49 million five- to seventeen-year olds (the elementary and secondary school-aged population). By 2000, this group had grown to 22% of the population or 61.5 million. Lessons MS&R has learned from focus groups across the country include a) despite prevailing stereotypes, children and teens love the printed word; b) great social spaces in the library increase usage; and c) this age group desires spaces that are tailored to their needs, with such amenities as comfortable, lounge-type seating, space for collaboration and individual concentration, and available, but not too visible, service points. These listening sessions guide the architect in creating a place that is right in terms of scale, spirit, and functionality.
- Holding listening sessions for adults. For example, over a course of 40 community meetings, 2,000 people expressed their opinion on what the Fayetteville Public Library should and should not have. Among the should haves: a) coffee shop, b) plethora of printed materials, c) different sized study rooms, d) LEED™ certification, e) computer-free quiet zones, and e) wireless connectivity access.

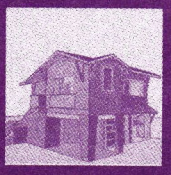
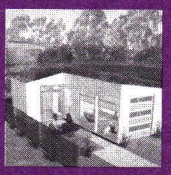
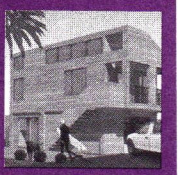
Architects, in the eyes of some, seem more interested in the library building as an object created *ex nihilo* than as a mirror of the town's self image. One of the dilemmas that an architect faces when designing a library is whether to capture a reflection of the town or the architect. Does the architect draw this image from the vocal few, the politicians who act on the funding, from the collective unconsciousness of the town, or their own point of view? Does the architect appear to be listening while trying to figure out how to communicate his or her personal design aspirations in terms of what he or she "hears"? In *Main Street,* Sinclair Lewis showed us that one main street is the continuation of main streets everywhere. Towns are shaped by the personal aspirations of well-intentioned people and destroyed by small-minded people who do not care to even darken the door of a library before declaring it irrelevant in the age of the Internet.

From Andrew Carnegie forward, it is often the library hero who makes the difference in the planning of the community library. For example, Mary Jean Place, an art dealer with a masters degree in library science living in Palo Alto, suggests that librarians become social activists. As a former member of the California Council of Library Trustees and co-founder of the Palo Alto Library Commission, she has worked for years to change the funding opportunities for libraries. Another notable advocate is Louise Schaper, director of the Fayetteville Public Library (previously with UCSD and ATT Bell Labs), who analyzed the library services from a financial point of view that illustrated the need for a new library in compelling and concrete economic terms to the civic government.

As architects, we can bring a similar, if less political, focus to the importance of the library by how well we conduct the design process and educate the public on the importance and potential of great library design—regardless of the size of the village, town, or city. Architects can emerge from the library design process as library heroes, if they exhibit exceptional courage, nobility, and strength, balancing their own needs with those of the community. ◉





ADUs of Santa Cruz

Bruce A. Race, FAiA, AICP

Across California, communities are struggling to accommodate new residents, create affordable housing, and conserve the character of neighborhoods. It is a big challenge, which some communities are trying to solve with small solutions, like the 500 square foot, second unit prototypes and accompanying development manual prepared by the City of Santa Cruz.

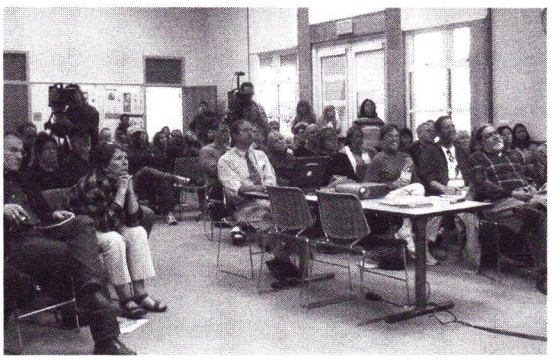
BACKGROUND

In 2003, Governor Gray Davis signed AB 1866, which prevented local government from blocking the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on single family lots when they met the local or the State's own default development standards. Santa Cruz has embraced and promoted ADUs as an opportunity to create badly needed affordable housing.

Santa Cruz had the dubious distinction of being the least affordable housing market in the United States in 2001. With over 18,000 single-family lots in the city, ADUs are key to rounding out their housing plan. The City wrote a request to the California Pollution Control Financing Authority (CPCFA) Sustainable Communities Program and was awarded a grant that would merge innovative design, community participation, and housing programs.

The City worked with seven architects to prepare

ADU prototypes. The architects were immersed in community dialogue. Over 400 people attended a series of videotaped workshops. Interaction with the architects and its documentation were important for Santa Cruz, as well as other communities, as the CPCFA wanted the process to be transferable and replicable.



Santa Cruz Workshop

CONTEXT

Located on the Pacific coast south of San Francisco, Santa Cruz enjoys Mediterranean weather conditions, including moderating breezes and 300 days of sunshine a year. The climate and the social energy of a coastal beach and university town inspire residents to pursue lifestyles that emphasize indoor-outdoor living. The University of California Santa Cruz community and northern Californian progressive leanings have also added a philosophical edge to design expectations, where the desire for self-expression and making new development "fit in" rub up against each other. There are plenty of opinions about design.

The Santa Cruz Zoning Standards for ADUs requires new units to be compatible with the existing house and neighborhood. The Manual helps homeowners understand how to look at their neighborhoods and lot to choose an ADU that meets their needs. In Santa Cruz, this means understanding how to fit into traditional neighborhoods with alleys, porches, and period style homes; transitional pre-war subdivisions with grid blocks, small lots, detached garages, and post-war starter housing; or contemporary suburban cul-de-sac neighborhoods with attached garages and driveways.

PROTOTYPES

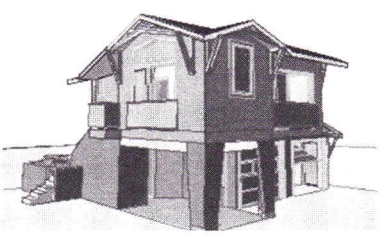
Each of seven architects developed a prototype. The program provides for a one-bedroom ADU with 500 square feet of enclosed living space. Even though the ADU plans are meant to be (nearly) ready for a homeowner to use, they must be flexible and adaptable.

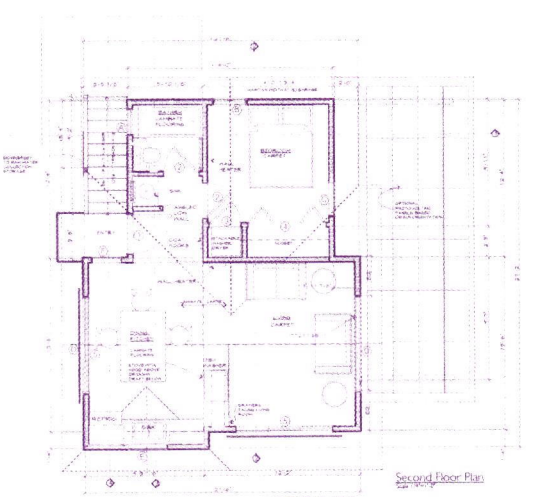
DETACHED ADU OVER AN EXISTING GARAGE

Boone/Low Architects and Planners

The Boone/Low prototype demonstrates how an ADU can be constructed over the top of an existing detached two-car garage located at the rear of the lot. The one bedroom plan orients the public spaces (living, dining, and kitchen spaces) toward the front driveway and private spaces (bath and bedroom) towards the rear. Dining and living spaces have large operable windows, which expand the visual space of these rooms to the outdoors. The plan includes tenant storage at the lower level adjacent to the deck.

The Boone/Low plan can be rotated and flipped to accommodate right, left, or rear access to the garage. The alley access variation presents itself as though the alley were a traditional residential street with a porch and front yard. The porch can be deleted or expanded depending on the site. Architectural variations could include traditional styles or contemporary expressions. Key to either approach will be the consistency between the new ADU and the existing garage in terms of materials, windows, and proportions. The plan also demonstrates opportunities to include "green" features, such solar panels on the garage roof and rainwater collection and storage under the ADU deck.



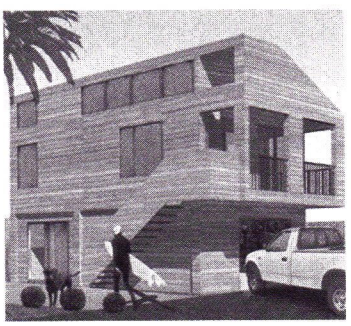


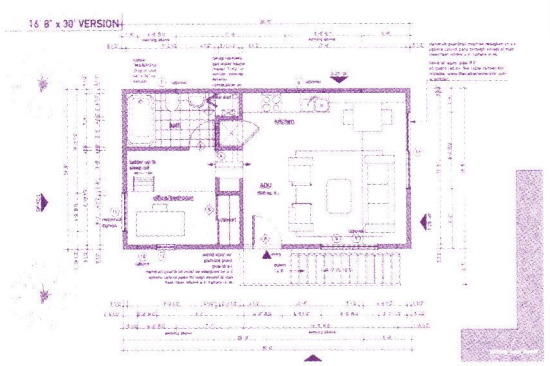
DETACHED ADU OVER NEW GARAGE

SixEight Design

The SixEight prototype demonstrates how an ADU can be constructed in a rear yard, reusing an existing driveway. The one bedroom plan orients the living, dining, and kitchen spaces towards the front driveway and private spaces (bath and bedroom) towards the rear. Dining and living spaces have large, operable windows, which expand the visual space of these rooms to the outdoors. The plan creates a lower level that is useable for both owners and tenants. A studio space opens on to a patio, and there are a workshop and a laundry room.

The plan can be rotated and flipped to accommodate right, left, or rear access to the garage. The alley access variation presents itself as though the alley were a traditional residential street with a porch and front yard. The porch can be deleted or expanded depending on the site. Architectural variations could include traditional styles or contemporary expressions. The plan "scoops" light and breezes with its hood-shaped form. It has opportunities to include "green" features, such solar panels on the roof (works best when roof is oriented south) and renewable and recycled materials.



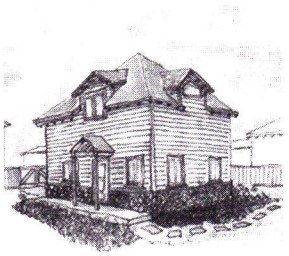


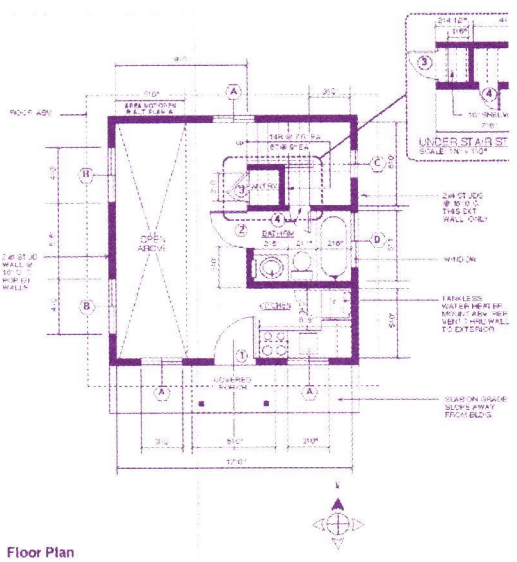
DETACHED 1-1/2 STORY ADU

Eve Reynolds Architect

This prototype by Eve Reynolds illustrates how a two-story ADU can be constructed to limit the impact on the yard area while maintaining a low profile. The ADU can be oriented towards views, private yards, away from neighbors, or to shape a shared space. The two-level ADU is organized symmetrically as four quadrants. The stair, bathroom, and kitchen are on half the lower level. The other half has dining and living spaces with an open ceiling to the sleeping room above. Storage pantry and linen closet are tucked under the stair.

The plan can be rotated and flipped to accommodate a variety of privacy, view, and utility access situations. Larger porches, window types, and roof styles can be added to the basic form of the ADU. The plan provides vertical venting through upper level dormer windows. A smaller footprint reduces the amount of paving and related runoff. As with the other ADUs, it can accommodate a variety of recycled and renewable materials.





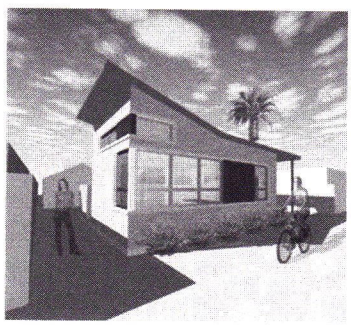
Floor Plan

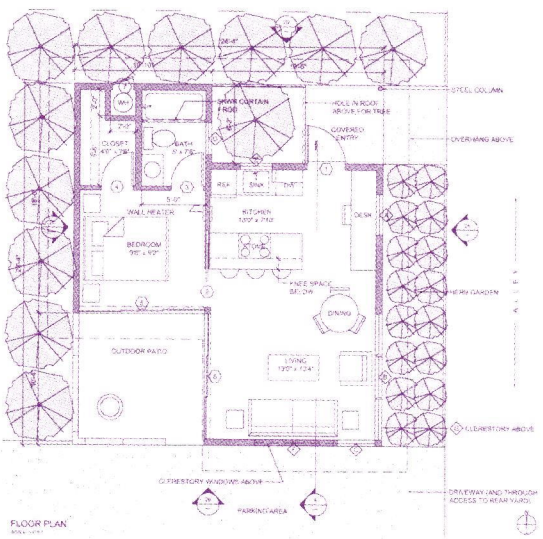
DETACHED SINGLE STORY ADU FACING AN ALLEY

CCS Architecture

The CCS Architecture ADU is a contemporary, urban alley house. The one-level ADU gets the most out of the 28' x 24' footprint by incorporating outdoor spaces. A private patio and tree-well are enveloped by the plan. The brightly sunlit kitchen, dining, and living spaces flow into gardens and patio. The bedroom also orients towards the patio and has private access to the bathroom.

The plan can be rotated and flipped to accommodate a variety of privacy, view, and utility access situations. The ADU can accommodate alternative parking locations, either in an existing or new garage or in the front part of the lot. The ADU could be adapted for rear yard locations. The plan provides for excellent daylighting and natural ventilation through clerestory windows. As with the other ADUs, it can accommodate a variety of recycled and renewable materials.



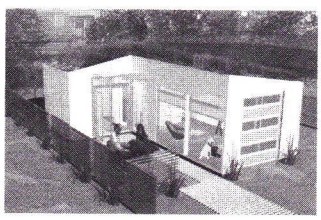


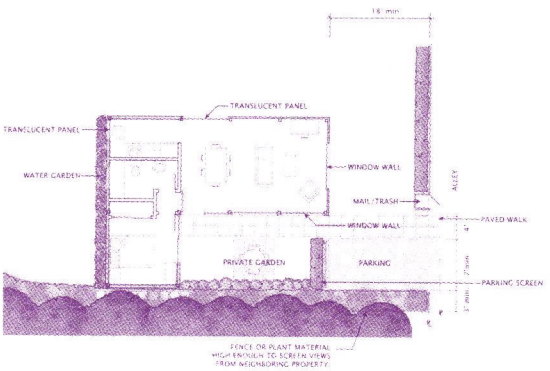
DETACHED SINGLE STORY ADU USING ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES

Peterson Architects

This prototype by Peterson Architects makes innovative use of a building panel system to create a small alley house. The ADU is set back the depth of a parking space and provides a small front yard facing the alley. A walkway passes along the edge of the yard and enters into a private courtyard. The one bedroom plan orients the dining and living spaces toward the courtyard, with large, operable windows that expand the visual space of these rooms to the outdoors. Translucent panels allow light into the kitchen and bathroom but maintain privacy.

The ADU construction technology is a commercial-grade system adapted for residential use. The non-structural panels come in a variety of sizes and colors. Translucent and transparent panels can be integrated into the design. Hung from a structural steel frame, the panels deliver high insulation values. The modular nature allows countless plan configurations. The plan as illustrated can be flipped and rotated creating different yard and spatial patterns. The plan also demonstrates a high level of attention to energy efficiency, daylighting, and integration of green finish materials. The design can be adapted to include a sod roof, water garden using gray water, and solar panels.



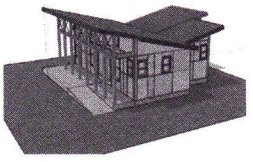


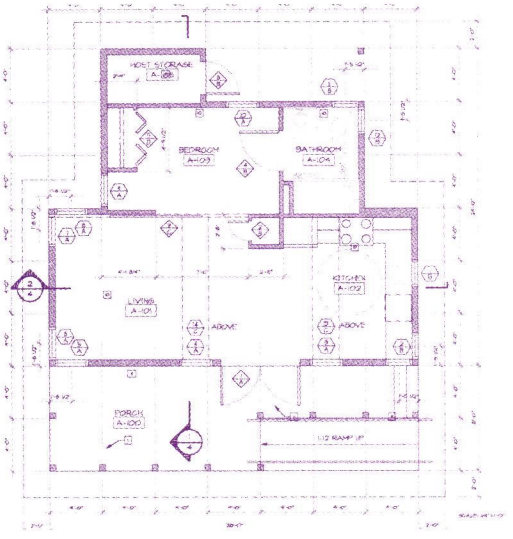
SINGLE STORY ADU USING ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCTION METHODS

David Baker + Partners, Architects

The David Baker + Partners, Architects ADU is designed to be located in a rear yard. The porch encourages a social orientation of the ADU toward a shared yard or alley. The raised porch creates a private space reached by steps and ramp. The prototype uses a four-foot grid as a basic organizational element. The panel system provides discipline to the plan organization, room proportions, and window placement. The bedroom has a rolling door that opens into the living and dining area. Windows paired in the corners provide views out but away from neighbors.

The construction technology reflects the emerging interest in prefabricated construction—trading off factory prices and quality for faster and less labor-intensive erection. The composite panels can be designed to incorporate a variety of performance and design features. The planning grid provides opportunities to develop layouts that are efficient and responsive to site and program. Different roofing, door, and window systems can be incorporated into the design. The design demonstrates a high level of attention to energy efficiency and integration of green finish materials and can be adapted to include solar panels.

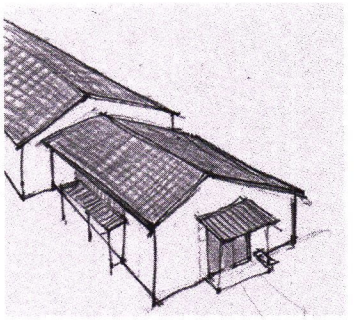


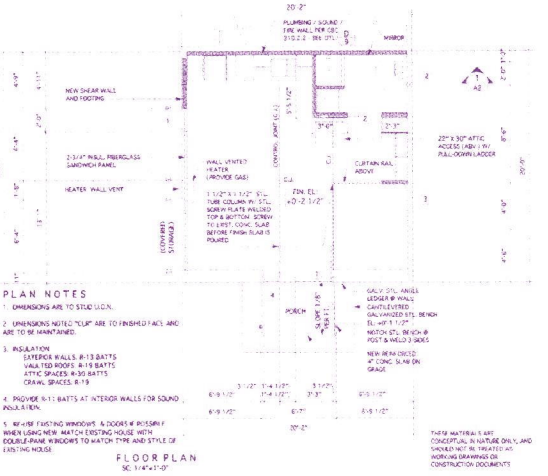


GARAGE CONVERSION

Mark Primack Architect

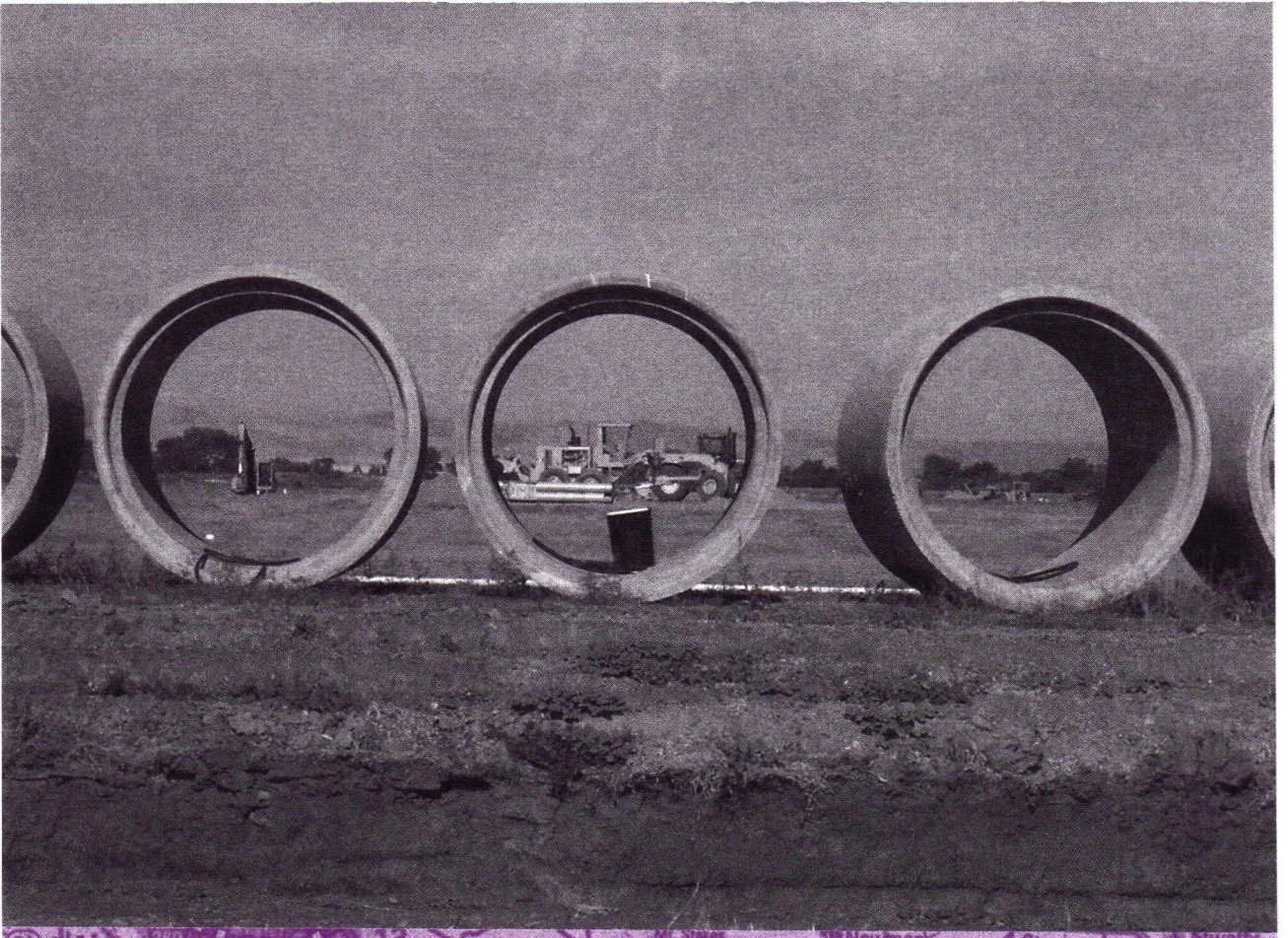
This ADU demonstrates how a simple 1970s Ranch with a gable roof and board and batten siding can convert its existing attached garage into an ADU. The house entry is set back from the street, approached by a garden path. The ADU is oriented towards the street with its own front yard and porch. Architectural interest is added to the sides of the garage with panels, window, and awnings, with an emphasis on privacy. The side yard is shallow, and the driveway is converted into three parking spaces.

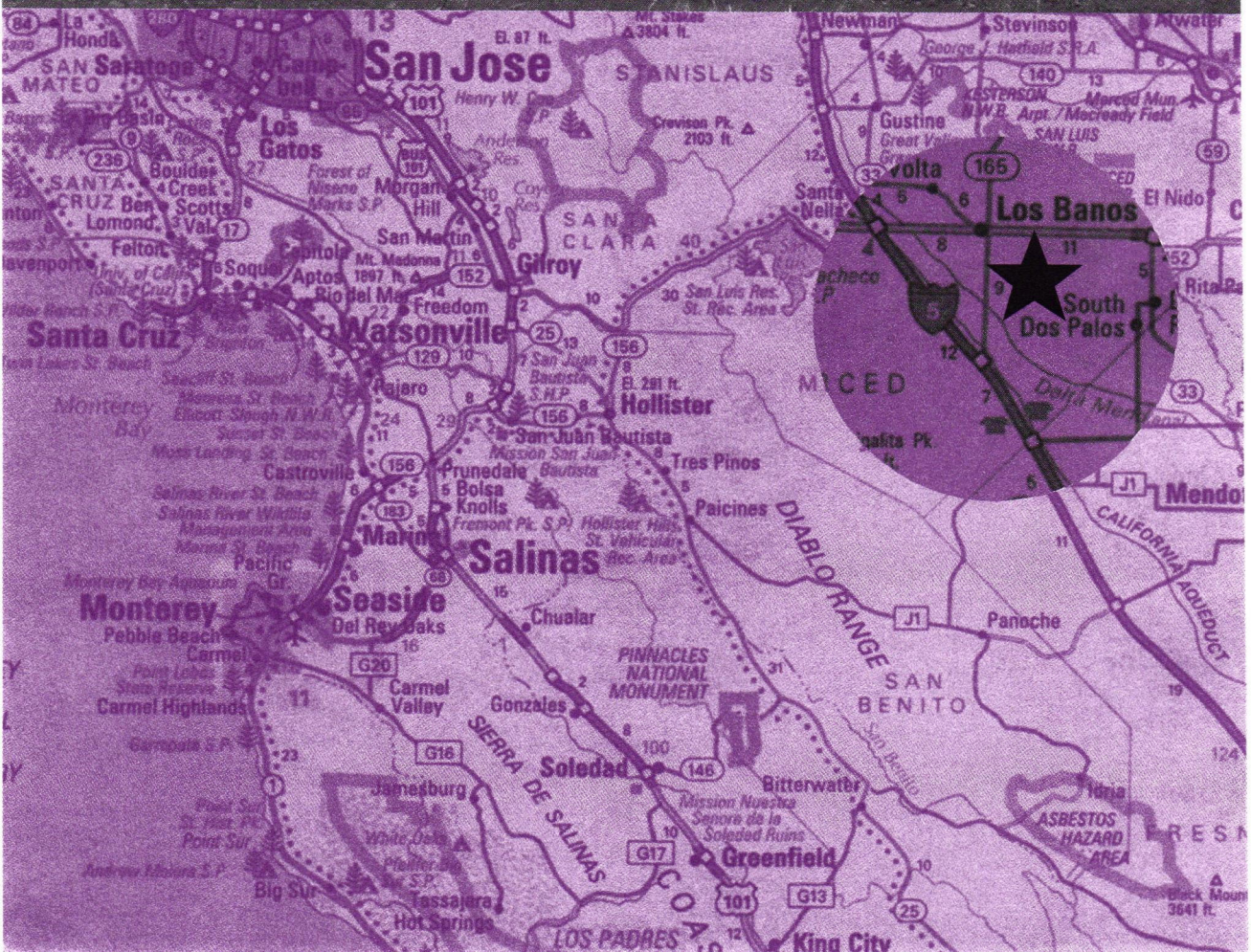




TAKE-AWAY LESSONS

Single-family neighborhoods and subdivisions provide ready infrastructure and opportunities to diversify housing options for Californians. ADUs can make housing affordable by supplementing mortgage payments and adding workforce housing. They reflect our demographic realities, our need to provide for elderly parents and children. And ADUs make it possible for American Dreamers to be consumers of smart, sustainable design. ◉

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Pebble Beach
Soledad
Greenfield
King City
Gonzales
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Paicines
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Bolsa Knolls
Castroville
Aptos
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Panoche
Los Banos
South Dos Palos
Gustine
Volta
Newman
Stevinson
El Nido
Mendota
Firebaugh
Dos Palos
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San Benito
Pinnacles National Monument
Asbestos Hazard Area
Mission Nuestra Señora de la Soledad Ruins
Stanislaus
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Fresno
Monterey Bay
Santa Clara
Santa Cruz
Merced
Fresno

Learning from Los Banos

Paul N. Halajian, AIA

THE GOLDEN STATE

It is difficult enough to understand California as an economic and cultural phenomenon if you have grown up here. For those who haven't—those whose exposure to and understanding of the state is derived from movies and the news media—the Golden State appears as a wonderful but really weird place, defined by movie star politicians, great universities, cultural amenities, professional sports, screwball politics, informality, diversity, The Industry (entertainment), earthquakes, good weather, eclectic cuisine, and surfing. The elusive—perhaps mythical—"California lifestyle," packaged as post-war modernity and romanticized by the Case Study House Program, has created a thin, Hollywood image, which, even today, California architects, movie producers, and fashion designers vainly pursue as a cultural mandate.

In fact, depending on what one is trying to accomplish in life (raise a family, start a business, go to school, become a citizen, retire, etc.), the state is either the land of opportunity or the land of obstruction. From a vantage point within the central San Joaquin Valley, the California lifestyle is a work in progress. It is being continually redefined, as hordes of refugees

from all over the western states and other parts of California mix with refugees from other countries and cultures in California's heartland. No one is quite sure what the San Joaquin Valley will look like—quantitatively or qualitatively—in twenty years, but there will certainly be more people living here, and housing will be the most significant piece in the livability puzzle.

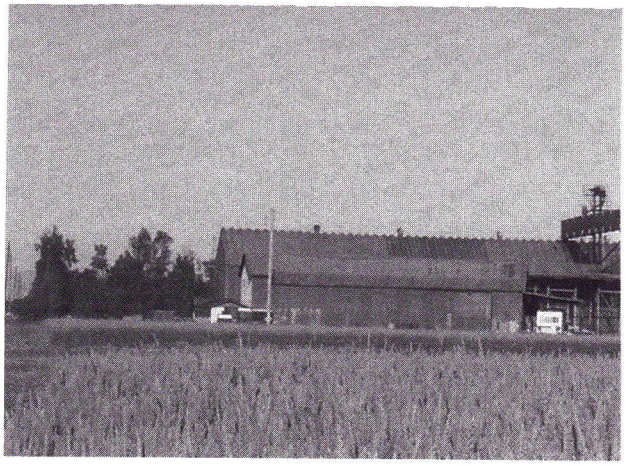
THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY OF THE FUTURE

The present trajectory of the San Joaquin Valley finds the communities of this region heading toward a bleak future. Without a healthy environment, accessible and affordable quality education, and job opportunities for people of every socio-economic level, the San Joaquin Valley of the future will become an environmental and societal problem that all taxpayers in California will have to fix.

The development of the San Joaquin Valley is at a critical juncture historically. The cities of the Valley are beginning to articulate a regional vision for the Valley's future that heads off the juggernaut of continued low-density sprawl at the expense of food production and environmental quality. As the most significant food-producing region in the world, population growth and food production have traditionally been at odds here. Visionary growers and food processors are now embracing precision farming practices that will create higher paying jobs and have less impact on the environment. Cities all over the Valley are rediscovering their downtowns. Higher housing densities and mixed-use developments are being encouraged where they were opposed not too long ago. These and other trends are beginning to shape a preferred future for the Valley that speaks of livable, sustainable, and affordable communities that provide a high standard of living and harmonious coexistence with precision farming operations.

HOUSING

One fact that Californians—architects included—often forget is that there is nothing homogeneous about this state. As designers of the built environment, we tend to follow trends established in the highly populated metropolitan areas, forgetting that California remains largely rural. The needs of rural California stand in stark contrast to the needs of San Francisco, San Jose, Los Angeles, or San Diego, but there is a common thread: *housing.*



Fluctuations in both macro- and micro-economic cycles initiate a ripple effect on the state's economy. The state-wide housing market is susceptible to these economic fluctuations, which can affect both renters and owners. In a 2004 report published by the Public Policy Institute of California, entitled *In Short Supply?: Cycles and Trends in California Housing,* authors Hans Johnson, Rosa Moller, and Michael Dardia note the following:

- There is evidence of a shortage of approximately 138,000 housing units state-wide.
- Almost all of the housing shortage originates in the Bay Area, Los Angeles, and San Diego, the state's most populated regions.
- A slowdown in housing production coincided with a slowdown in population growth that occurred in the 1990s.
- Population growth in the 1990s featured a disproportionately large composition of children and immigrants, both of which tend to consume less housing than other demographic groups. Children don't start households, and immigrants tend to live in larger extended family households.
- The recession of the 1990s slowed construction in direct response to changes in the business cycle, interest rates, income, prices, and inflation.

The cost of housing and the supply of housing are the most important determinants in establishing the cost of living index, which is often viewed as an indicator of how livable a community may be. The housing market often drives social trends and new patterns of living in a local economy. A vivid example of the role that the cost and supply of housing can play in the growth of a community and the transformation of an entire region can be found in Los Banos, California.

LOS BANOS AND THE HOME OWNERSHIP URGE

Los Banos lies in western Merced County, served by Highways 152 and 165 and Interstate 5. It is approximately sixty miles northwest of Fresno, northeast of Monterey, and southeast of San Jose. This is a rapidly growing community of families, many of whom are attracted to the city's relatively low cost of living and affordable home prices. Census data indicate that between 1990 and 2000 alone, the city grew from 14,519 to 25,869 residents, a 78 percent population gain. Many of those moving to Los Banos are families headed by people who provide services to Bay Area communities, but who cannot afford to own a home in the community where they work.

The city and county have historically been family-oriented communities, but by 2000 Los Banos edged past the county in family households. A recent study of childcare facility needs, executed by Bay Area Economics (BAE) of Berkeley, indicated that over 80 percent of households in Los Banos are families, and almost 54 percent of those households have children. By comparison, only 69 percent of California households overall are families, and only 40 percent have children. The BAE study found that the city's average household size of 3.33 persons per household exceeds both the county and the state average.

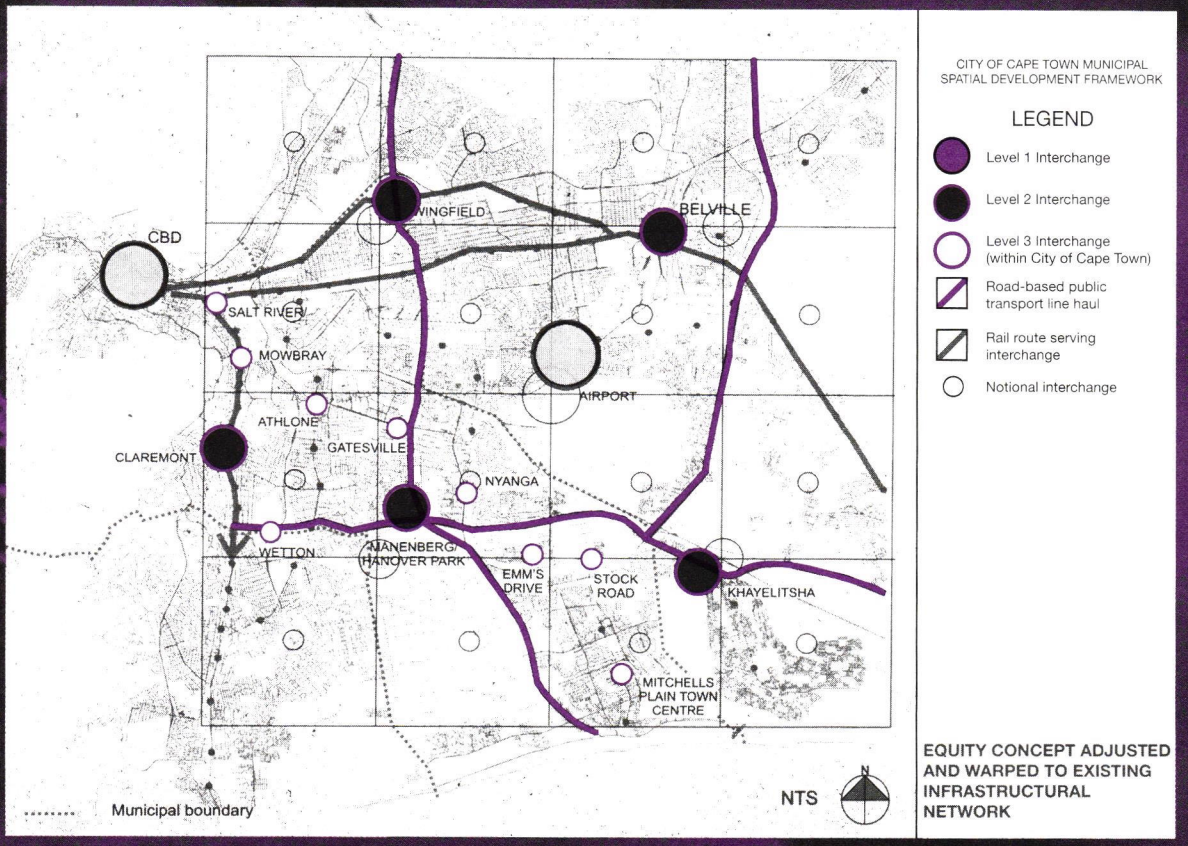
The study's authors, Simon Alejandrino and Amber Evans, found that, "While Los Banos's low cost of living has attracted many families to the area, workers must now face long commute times to employment centers such as the Bay Area and are away from home for a significant portion of the workday." Statistics show that approximately one half (47 percent) of Los Banos residents who work outside the home leave before 7:00 a.m., while 36 percent of countywide workers and 30 percent of California workers do so. The median commute is 45 minutes (one way), and almost one in four workers travels over 90 minutes to work (24 percent). As of the 2000 census, households in Los Banos earned a median income of $43,690, compared to $47,493 for the state.

As a direct result of housing affordability and the relatively close proximity to higher paying jobs found, for example, in San Jose, a living pattern common in larger cities but new to Los Banos has emerged. Because of the 45- to 90-minute commute, children are dropped off at school before school begins. After school, children are on their own until parents return home. This situation has generated the need for more and better childcare, and the City of Los Banos is now addressing this issue. The BAE study found that, based on current growth projections, there is a need for 724 subsidized childcare center slots in Los Banos through 2007. Until the need is met, children and families have to cope with the ongoing struggle between owning a home and providing adequate and safe childcare.

THE CALIFORNIA PSYCHE AND THE FUTURE OF THE VALLEY

What is causing Californians to move to Los Banos from parts of the state that are considered "more desirable" and spend the same amount of time (if not more) commuting? Perhaps there is something in the California psyche that simultaneously pushes us to be in motion and to be rooted in a home that we own. The Los Banos illustration is a reminder of the insatiable urge for homeownership that is fueling the transformation of rural California to suburban California. This seemingly inevitable transformation will exacerbate the further degradation of the San Joaquin Valley unless aggressive and informed planning policies and design guidelines are adopted and enforced both regionally and locally.

The challenge presented to designers, planners, developers, local jurisdictions, politicians, and farmers is to work together to resist the momentum imposed by the trajectory of the past and to work toward a preferred future. We must deflect the impending default future and move toward a vision that realizes clean air, clean water, affordable housing, quality education, support of precision agriculture, and job creation—a vision that will serve the complete cross section of Valley society. While this sounds like election year rhetoric, it is, unfortunately, the daunting challenge facing the "bread basket" of the eighth-strongest economy in the world. ◉



CITY OF CAPE TOWN MUNICIPAL SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

LEGEND

- Level 1 Interchange
- Level 2 Interchange
- Level 3 Interchange (within City of Cape Town)
- Road-based public transport line haul
- Rail route serving interchange
- Notional interchange

EQUITY CONCEPT ADJUSTED AND WARPED TO EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURAL NETWORK

Design as a Catalyst for Social Change

David Dewar

This article is a version of papers previously presented to the AIA Sacramento Chapter and at the Monterey Design Conference, with the support of the Leonakis Beaumont Group.

In writing about design as a catalyst for social change, it is necessary to begin with two qualifying remarks. The first is that I will be writing about design at the level of settlements, not buildings: the focus will be on urban design. The second is that I will be illustrating the argument with material from South Africa. There clearly are significant contextual differences between South Africa and the USA (the most notable of which is the extent of poverty). I sense however, that there are also some similarities. Three of these are particularly important.

First, with increasing globalization, patterns of poverty and inequality are redistributing: increasingly, no country will be immune from the challenges these pose. Second, the use of limited natural, fiscal, and other resources is increasingly a global issue, and the need to use resources wisely will rise in importance on all national agendas. Third, the philosophic basis underpinning the recent spatial development of cities in many parts of the world is remarkably similar: most have been significantly informed by the precepts of modernism.

The article is structured into four parts. In the first I pose the question, "How well have we been doing in the art of settlement-making?" and, through it, identify some structural problems. In the second, I suggest a number of changes that are essential for substantial improvement in urban performance. In the third, I focus on a sequence of projects

drawn from Cape Town to illustrate the meaning of the words. Finally, I draw some generalized conclusions about the implications of these issues for all of us as spatial designers.

THE PROBLEM

How well have we been doing in the art of settlement-making over the last seven decades, the period when society consciously broke with centuries of tradition to pursue a brave new urban future? The short answer is, not well at all. Despite the enormous amounts being invested in urban areas internationally, emerging urban environments are commonly mono-functional, sterile, monotonous, and inconvenient places in which to live. In particular:

- Their sprawling low density forms result in massive destruction of valuable agricultural land and land of high amenity;
- They generate huge amounts of vehicular movement with associated and worrying increases in congestion, in air and water pollution, and in energy depletion;
- They mitigate, through their fragmentation, against the achievement of efficient and viable public transportation systems;
- They result in environments that are highly inconvenient and expensive places in which to live and that, frequently, increase poverty and inequality, since it is the poor who are most affected. They are impositionary environments, since they reduce people's choices about how their time and money should be spent;
- They generate limited opportunities for small business generation, largely because of diffuse and diluted thresholds. At the same time, increasing numbers of people globally will have no option but to generate their own livelihoods;
- The quality of the spatial environment is ubiquitously poor, if not directly hostile. These environments degrade people's dignity; and
- They result in environments that are increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain.

The root causes of these problems are not professional incompetence or a lack of political will (although both of these are evident around the world). The causes are structural: they result from the very nature of the modernization paradigm. There are three primary connections between modernism and poor urban performance:

- The first is the profoundly anti-urban or suburban ethos underpinning the paradigm. The freestanding pavilion surrounded by private space is promoted as the dominant image of the 'good urban life.' The same model is promoted, even as the plot size is cut to a point where the system yields the benefits neither of urbanity nor of green space. It is becoming increasingly apparent that, in most countries of the world, this model and the sprawl which inevitably accompanies it are non-sustainable.
- The second is that the model is based on separation and mono-functionality—yet sterility is the inevitable consequence of mono-functionality, regardless of how skillfully environments are made.
- The third is that modernism has been underpinned by programmatic approaches to settlement making. The focus of programmatic approaches is land use. Idealized land use patterns are conceptualized, neatly separated, and distributed in space. The approach is essentially quantitative. Space demands are 'scientifically' calculated on the basis of thresholds, and a land use schedule is generated (x number of households can support y primary schools, z secondary schools, a clinic, so many meters of commercial space, and so on). Planning and design then become the more or less rational distribution of the parts or elements. In this conception, settlement making is seen as a rational, comprehensive, highly controlled process leading to balanced end-states.

The problem with these approaches is that the environments which result from them are inevitably sterile, for two main reasons. First, the 'science' of prediction upon which these approaches are predicated is notoriously unreliable. The result is environments that appear permanently incomplete, with large amounts of residual space lying around waiting for events to 'catch-up.' This, in turn, dilutes thresholds and frequently ensures that events never do catch up.

Second, plan-making is essentially driven from the bottom-up: from the parts. When this approach is applied to housing—particularly low-income housing, which is the major growth component of towns and cities internationally—it is played out like this: shelter is viewed as the highest priority, and the individual dwelling unit—usually the freestanding, single story unit—is seen as the basic building block of urban environments. The first task therefore is seen as the need to service the site (with water, sewage disposal, road access, and—sometimes—electricity) and, in relation to this task, concerns of engineering efficiency, as opposed to any social or environmental concerns, dominate. Collections of individual units are then arranged into discrete clusters or cells (neighborhood units and the like), in the naive belief that this promotes community, and they are usually scaled by the requirements of machines, particularly the motor car (even though

the majority of people do not own cars and will not do so within the foreseeable future). These collections then give rise to a notional program of standardized public facilities, seen as independent, self-contained entities. Space for them is distributed evenly within the cells to optimize 'access' and 'equity.' In short, settlements are built from the bottom up.

The reality of all developing countries, including South Africa, however, is that financial resources are woefully limited. In this climate, a number of consequences inevitably results from the approach described. First, levels of housing assistance, even to those who gain access to such assistance, are continually cut back (plots get smaller and levels of shelter and utility services are reduced), but always within the same model, centered on the concept of the freestanding unit.

Second, a continually smaller proportion of households gains public housing assistance. 'Islands of privilege' are created, and these in turn give rise to waves of negative social practices (downward raiding, war lording, bureaucratic corruption, political patronage, and so on).

Third, cuts occur in social services: on the one hand, not all the planned social infrastructure (schools, health facilities, and so on) can be provided; on the other, those facilities that are provided are cut to a point where their operation is severely impaired—for example, in the case of schools, libraries are minimally stocked, science laboratories are poorly equipped, sports fields are not maintained, and so on. The 'equitable,' 'accessible' pattern becomes inequitable and inaccessible, since the facilities that exist are embedded: they are located to serve specified local communities exclusively, and many households can therefore gain access to essential social services only with great difficulty and at considerable expense, if at all. Since there is no way that individual households can substitute for these essential public services, the degree of disadvantage is enormous. Further, the (usually excessive) spaces allocated for facilities that do not materialize fragment the urban fabric and frequently become dangerous, environmentally negative, liabilities. Spatially, the inevitable consequence is sterility, since nothing holds the whole together.

A WAY FORWARD: CREATING A NEW TRADITION

Two fundamental paradigm changes are essential if significant improvements are to be achieved. The first is enthusiastically embracing an urban, as opposed to a suburban, model of development. Particularly, settlements need to be scaled to the pedestrian and to efficient public transportation. This means the reversal of some of the central tenets of modernization:

- Compaction, as opposed to sprawl
- Integration and mix, not fragmentation and separation;
- Equity, as opposed to increasing inequality;
- Sustainability, as opposed to inefficiency and waste; and
- Concentrating on collective actions—actions that impact positively on the lives of large numbers of people, as opposed to the individual household—as the basic focus of social change.

The second is shifting from programmatic to non-programmatic approaches to planning and design.

NON-PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES

Non-programmatic approaches are different in a number of important respects from programmatic ones, and this way of thinking is central to urban design. First, they are driven by a concern with the performance of the whole, not the maximization of the part. They are based on the central realization that, for the whole to work well, no part can be maximized, for compromises are required.

Second, their focus is not on land use but the accommodation and celebration of human activity in space.

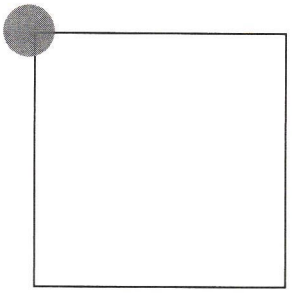
Third, the emphasis is not on idealized forms but on thinking from first principles, based on the two ethical legs of environmentalism and humanism. This thinking starts not with assumptions about technology, but with the lowest common denominator: people on foot.

Fourth, they do not seek to determine spatial distributions of activities directly through autocratic, top-down directives but through manipulating the logic of access, to which all activities respond, in order to generate broadly predictable outcomes.

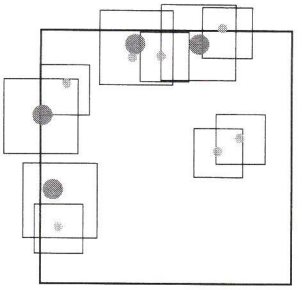
Finally, they do not attempt to define the good urban life, applicable to all people, but concentrate on the creation of choice. In this sense they are enabling, not prescriptive.

STRUCTURE

The concepts of structure and space are central to non-programmatic approaches. It is therefore necessary to define them in greater detail. Structure is the design device traditionally used in settlement making to order the landscape. The main elements of public structure (generically: space, place, movement, institutions, and services; more commonly and more specifically, these translate into green space, all modes of movement including walking, public urban space, social facilities, utility and emergency services) are manipulated and co-ordinated to create a geometry of point, line, and grid. The geometry generated by the association among these elements creates a logic to which all activities, large and small, formal and informal, public and private, respond in their own interests.

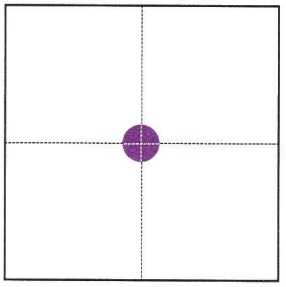


CBD INACCESSIBLE TO BULK OF CITY

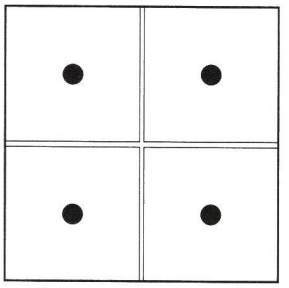


INTERCHANGES AND CENTERS ALONG HISTORIC INVESTMENT ROUTES

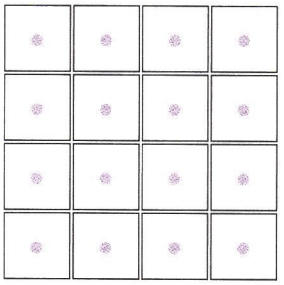
THE DISTRIBUTION PROBLEM



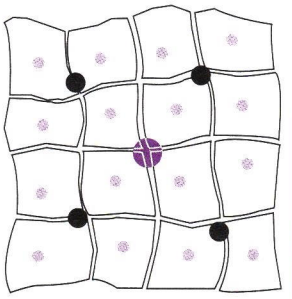
ONE LEVEL 1 ZONE WITH A LEVEL 1 INTERCHANGE



FOUR LEVEL 2 ZONES EACHWITH A LEVEL 2 INTERCHANGE

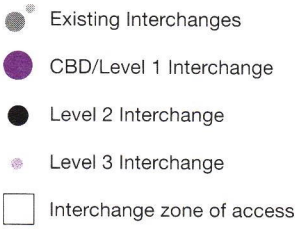


SIXTEEN LEVEL 3 ZONES EACH WITH A LEVEL 3 INTERCHANGE



APPLICATION & WARPING OF CONCEPT

THE CONCEPT FOR DISTRIBUTION OF AN EQUITABLE INTERCHANGE HIERARCHY



The conceptual approach

The key to understanding the spatial logic of structure lies in the concept of access. In effect, the geometry created through the co-ordination of the public elements of structure generates an 'accessibility surface' across landscapes: it creates a reference system of points and lines of greater or lesser accessibility. Further, the system is a hierarchical or differentiated one: it creates different levels of access to different types of opportunities (greater or lesser access to green space, for example, is defined by the relationship of land parcels to the pattern of green space).

Every activity has its own logical requirements in terms of access. At the most fundamental level, these logical requirements relate to variations in the needs for publicness (exposure) or privacy (secretiveness). All activities have these requirements and seek to optimize them. The more complex the accessibility surface, the greater range of choices offered to decision-makers. Conversely, the more simplified the structure, the greater the tendency for highly accessible locations to be appropriated by the strongest players requiring exposure, to the exclusion of all others.

The structural system therefore establishes a logic of exposure and privacy to which any activity can respond. It is through this structural system that rich choices are offered without imposing a particular form of lifestyle for everyone. The system is not dependent on judgments about what constitutes the 'good' urban life, as is the case in programmatic approaches: it simply creates choices. The richer the range of choices, the better the system. In this way, it allows people to self-actualize. In primarily residential systems, for example, real choice does not relate to architectural style or issues relating to how the dwelling is organized or designed. Rather, it relates to choices in lifestyle, from very private (and frequently somewhat less convenient) living to very public, intense (and more convenient) living. This way of thinking, then, does not deal with 'either-ors' (either access to the private green space of suburbia and almost no convenience—to the extent that people are forced to spend many hours a day in cars ferrying children—or public living with no access to green space), as tends to be the case with the current urban model, but with degrees of choice, within limits.

SPACE

In the same way that it is possible to create a hierarchy of access, it is possible to create an associated hierarchy of public space. In non-programmatic approaches, all public space is seen as social space (it is not residual space). All public space is multi-functional space. These are the places where children play, old people meet and gossip, lovers court. When these

spaces are properly made (when they are defined, enclosed, humanly-scaled, surveilled, and landscaped) they massively enhance the enjoyment of the activities they accommodate, and they determine the dignity of the entire environment. The primary role of buildings in this regard is to make and to define the public space.

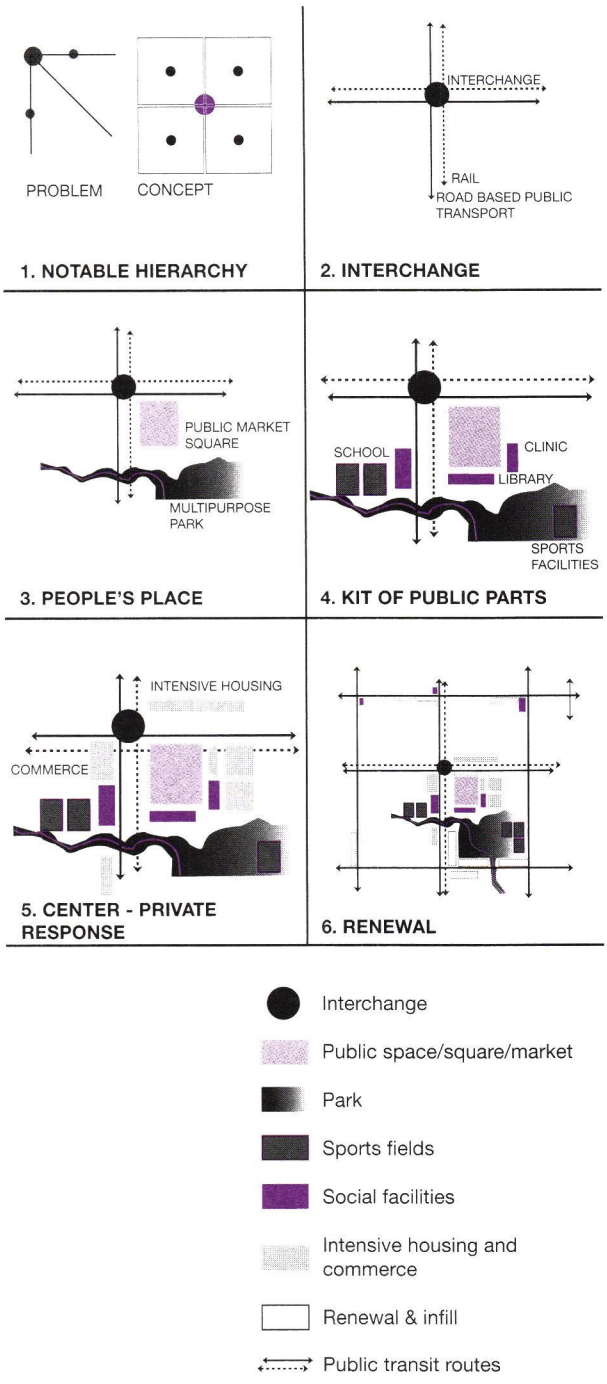
Conversely, when the public spaces are hostile, the entire environment is hostile, regardless of how much is invested in individual buildings. This was one of the great failures of modernism: the movement elevated the freestanding object (the building) as the focus of design attention over all else and, in the process, fragmented much of the public environment.

Design is the creative integration of these different forms of hierarchy (the hierarchy of access and the hierarchy of space) into a framework (not comprehensive end-states) which creates a logic of publicness and privateness within which all activities, large and small, can find a place in terms of their own requirements for accessibility. At the same time, the spatial quality of the framework contributes directly to the quality of the environment and life. In this integrating process, the ordering concept (the idea) is sympathetically molded to, and informed by, the landscape. This molding warps and distorts the idea, thereby giving it richness and life, but it may not destroy it.

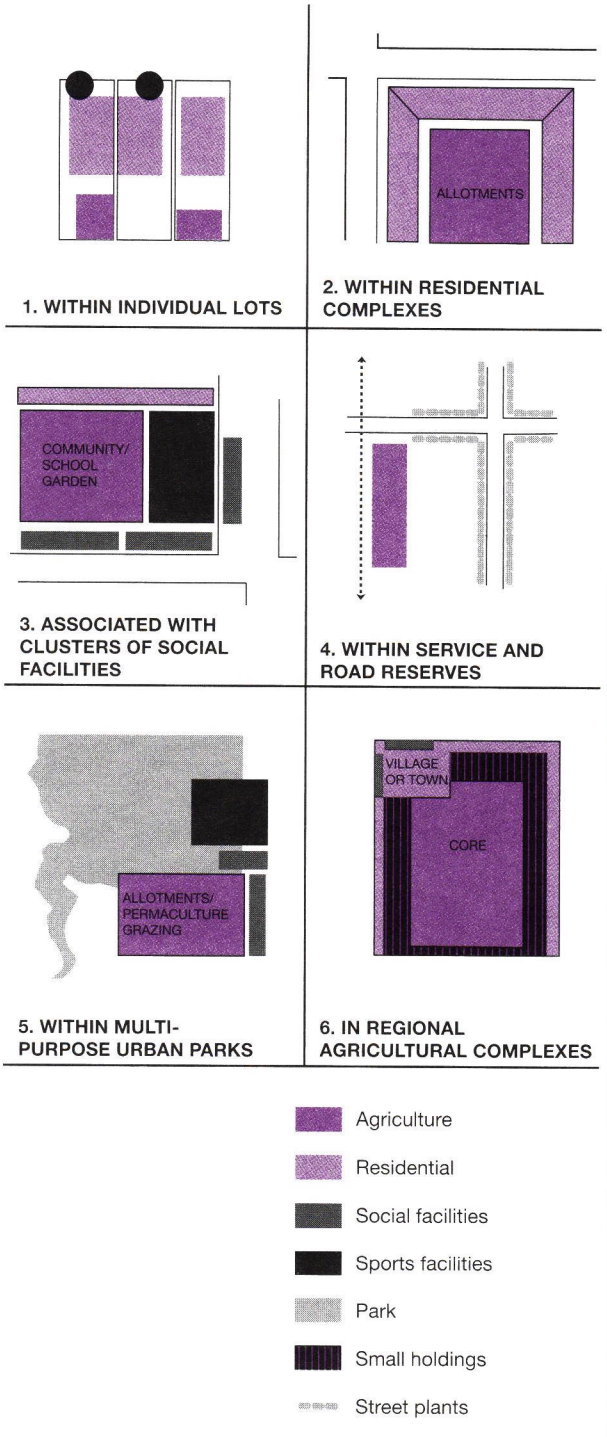
THE DIGNIFIED PUBLIC PLACES PROGRAM OF THE CITY OF CAPE TOWN

In 1999, I was appointed core consultant to head up a small team to develop a Spatial Framework for the City of Cape Town. The Framework attempted to set out a logical argument for managing the emerging spatial structure of the city in a manner that, progressively and cumulatively, achieves greater human dignity, equity, integration, and sustainability and a sense of place over time, in the face of severe fiscal constraints.

The creation of high quality public space was seen as central to achieving the aims of the framework. The argument recognized that, while the quality of the public spatial environment is important for everyone, it is crucial in the lives of the poor. A defining characteristic of poverty is that poor people spend a large amount of time in public space, because the individual dwelling unit cannot accommodate all, or even most, of a household's daily activities. Accordingly, urban public spaces (streets, squares, promenades, and green spaces) should be seen as representing the primary form of social infrastructure in cities. When these spaces are properly made, they promote human dignity: everyone is the same within them. It is this point, I believe, that defines the strongest connection between environment and behavior. When environments have no



The process of development of centers



Concept for productive green space at various scales

dignity, they generate a lack of self-esteem, and they limit a sense of possibilities. They also represent the lowest entry-cost form of economic infrastructure, particularly for informal trading.

It was also recognized that it is impossible to direct the same amount of public investment to all places. An important program which resulted from the process of plan formulation early on, therefore, was the 'people's places program,' later termed the 'dignified public places program.' Highly accessible and structurally significant places were identified through the logic of the plan and were singled out for public investment, to create special places that would become community foci in the lowest income areas and, hopefully, over time, attract private investment to them. The idea, then, was one of strategic urban surgery to encourage spontaneous regeneration.

The primary purposes of this program are four-fold:

- To create places of dignity for informal gathering in the poorest parts of the city;
- To act as a catalyst to encourage private investment;
- To create opportunities for small business—most of these spaces also operate as markets; and
- To create more hygienic conditions for the selling of foods, particularly cooked food.

Sixteen of these projects have been completed. The intention is to steadily roll out from this beginning at a rate of ten to fifteen projects a year.

Significantly, the budgets for all of these projects have all been negotiated. They are all made up of voluntary contributions from a number of different line function departmental budgets (particularly design services, transportation, economic development, and parks and bathing). This is the first time this has ever occurred in the history of Cape Town. The process has not been easy: there are still dimensions of conflict around different departmental agendas and issues of management. Nevertheless, the projects have had a profound impact in terms of promoting interdisciplinary thinking, and there are rapidly growing levels of co-operation and trust. In the longer term, there is a real chance that these interdisciplinary projects will have significant impacts on institutional design. (Incidentally, the program was awarded the Ruth and Ralph Erskine Prize for Architecture for 2003.)

CONCLUSION

Any objective review of current settlement-making practices internationally must conclude that the professions concerned with the built environment are not serving their societies particularly well. Bringing about substantial improvements will

not be easy, but it is essential. In my view, it is the primary responsibility of the design professions to initiate these changes. Change will not come from elsewhere.

What are some of the implications for this way of thinking for us all, as spatial designers?

First, we need to rediscover a belief in the importance of the role of spatial design as an instrument of social change in society. Our primary role in society is monitoring spatial trends and placing before society a new and better sense of possibilities, however radical or unpopular this may be perceived to be. This is our expertise; its measure is not in terms of the rich and powerful few, but in the impacts on the common men, women, and children without access to large personal resources or to sophisticated technologies. We need to proudly embrace our fundamental social role as promoters of social justice.

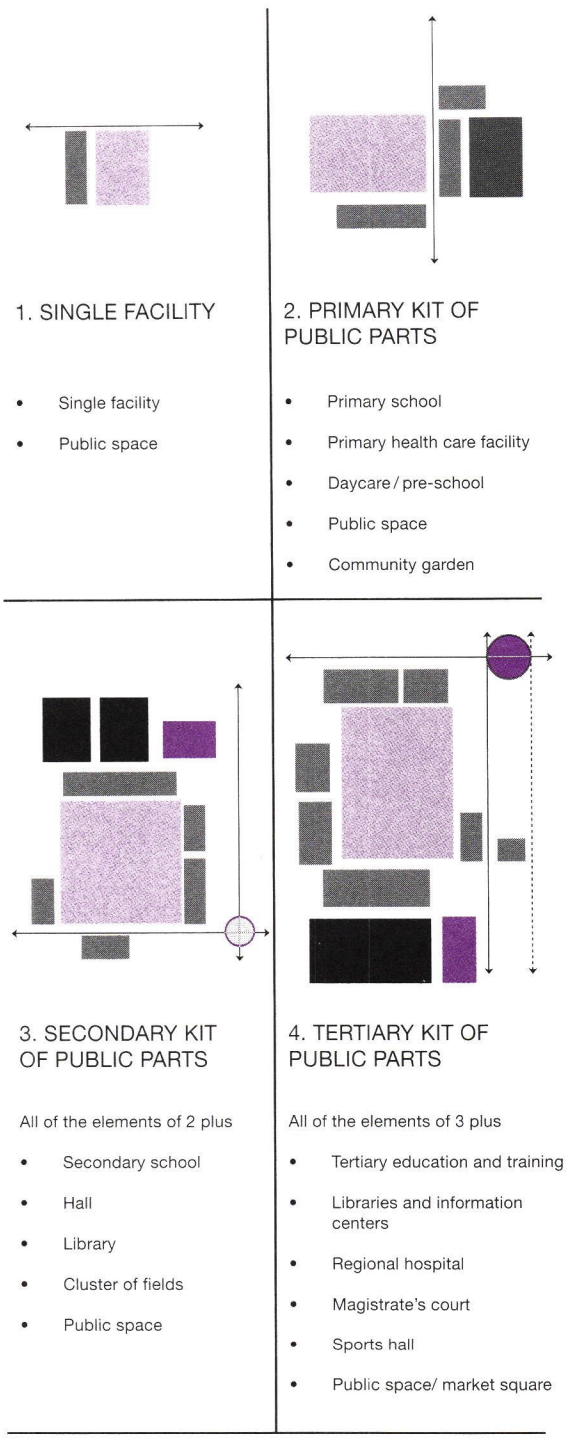
Second, we need to return to a position that locates the beginnings of all design on the two ethical legs of environmentalism (the needs of nature and the need to design sympathetically with these) and humanism (the needs of people), as opposed to pre-occupations with technologies and form.

Third, we need to recognize that any design problem is only part of a broader whole. The primary responsibility of any project is to improve the quality of the whole. It is a great design decision, for example, to recognize that sometimes buildings are more appropriately background objects, whose role is to integrate, as opposed to putting all design on an aggressive, competitive basis with all other buildings.

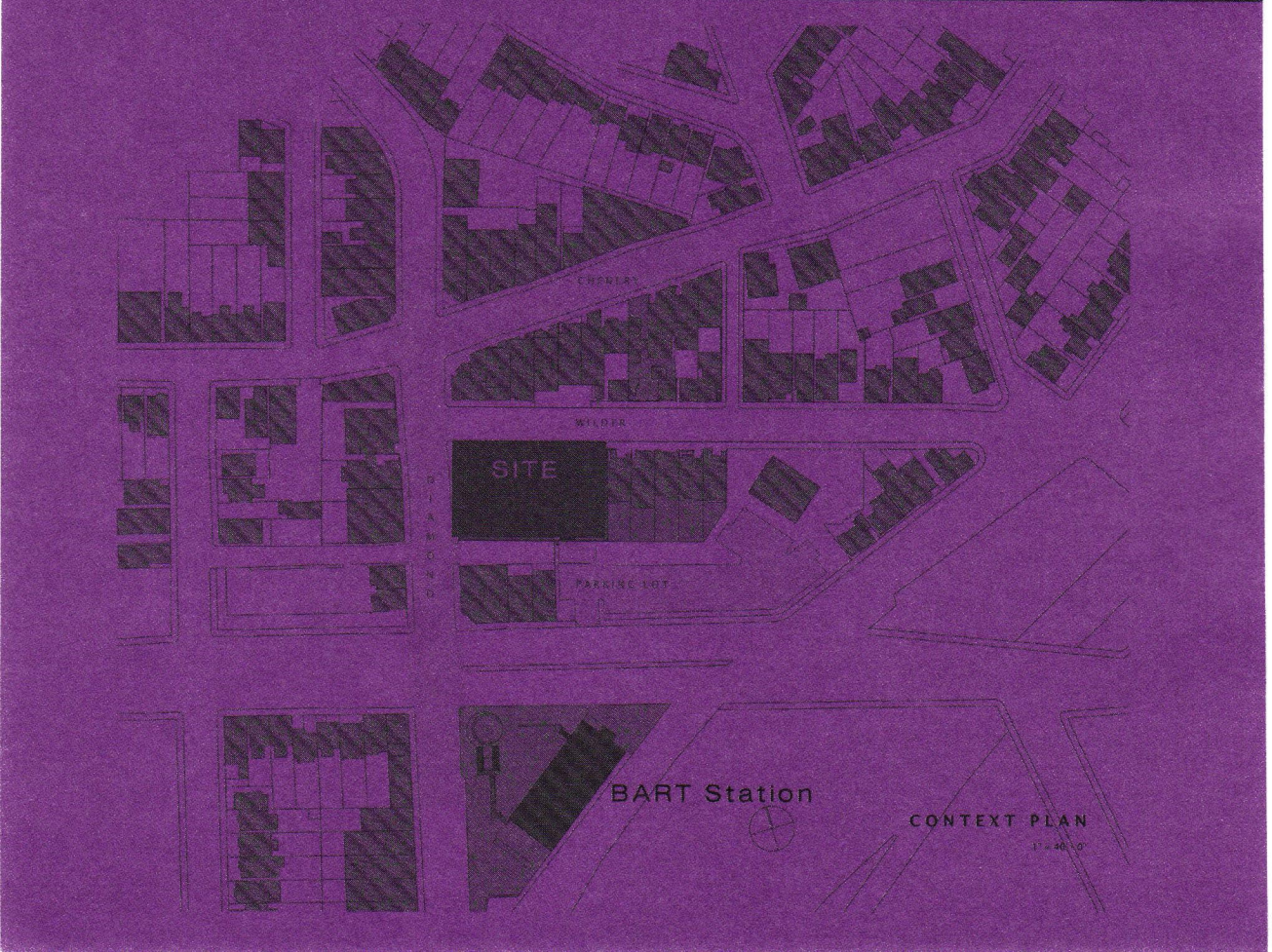
Fourth, we must recognize that spatial quality is defined by the quality of the public spatial environment, not the individual object. The primary responsibility of all buildings and spatial objects is to contribute to the quality of the public spatial environment.

Finally, we must recognize that the distinction between 'public' and 'private' projects is an erroneous, misleading one. Every project offers an opportunity (however great or small) to give something back to the public at large, and it is the responsibility of every designer to seize that opportunity. Good design begins with recognizing the public good associated with a project.

If we begin to do these things, consistently and honestly, on a daily basis, we will begin to regain the respect of the public at large and the absolute need for good spatial design will be increasingly recognized. If we do not, our role will become increasingly marginalized. ◉



Kit or cluster of public parts



CONTEXT PLAN

How to Turn a Parking Lot into Apartments, a Library, and a Grocery Store, the Hard Way

David Prowler

A version of this article appeared previously in the newsletter of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR).

You hear a lot these days in planning circles about "transit oriented development," "smart growth," "transit villages," "new urbanism." They all mean denser development near transit, filling in the city so the suburbs don't sprawl. "Mixed use" comes up a lot—living over stores, walking to run your errands. The other hot topic is "public/private partnerships," governments and private developers getting together to develop a public benefit use, leveraging public funds or land with the entrepreneurship and risk-taking of a private developer. Pretty much everyone gets behind the *ideas* of mixed-use infill development near transit and of public/private partnerships. Here is a case study of what can happen when such a project is actually attempted—at least in one case, in one neighborhood, with one developer.

The project is a family-owned, neighborhood-serving grocery store, a new branch library (replacing a tiny leased storefront branch a block away), and fifteen two-bedroom apartments, two of them low income and subsidized by the development. The 16,000 square foot site is a block from a BART station and within a few blocks of five bus lines. It is in Glen Park, the kind of San Francisco neighborhood where the old-timers couldn't buy their homes today. Most homes are one or two stories over a garage, with some newer developments of up to four stories.

Facing Page: The Glen Park neighborhood

Until a fire in late 1998, the site held the Diamond Super and its popular butcher. The rear two-thirds of the lot contains about 25 metered parking spaces, open to the public, on a month to month lease with the City. The previous owner had entered into this arrangement, because non-customers were using up his lot, and he didn't want to police it.

After the fire, neighbors deluged the listing realtor with petitions—2,500 signatures—with one message: no chain store. And, in fact, Walgreen's was keen on the site. In response, the Mayor and Board of Supervisors issued resolutions calling for the return of a neighborhood-serving grocery.

A neighborhood couple formed the Glen Park Marketplace Phoenix LLC to accomplish that goal by purchasing, in cash, the several lots on which the project will be built. The original proposal was to build a full service grocery store with a childcare center on the second floor and in the back, and with a floor of underground parking for store patrons. Right off the bat, this project was unique. The motivations were to provide a grocery store and a childcare center, not to make money. The times were different, and the owner was flush.

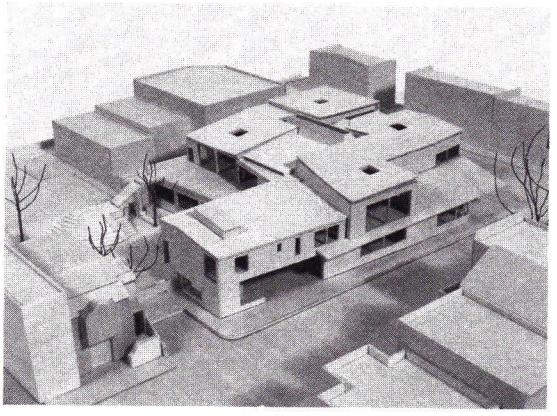
THE TEAM

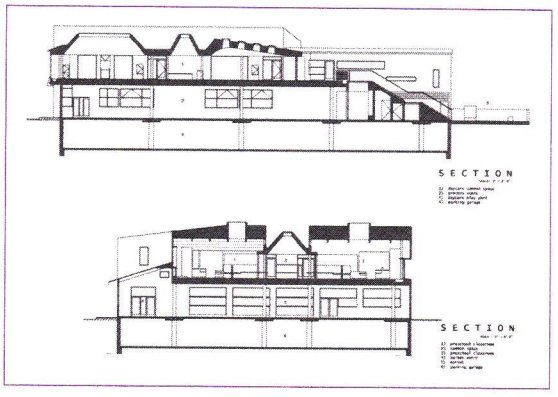
I was the fee developer, meaning that I was paid to assemble the site, develop the program, negotiate the sales of the building spaces, secure entitlements, find financing and insurance, contract with and manage consultants, etc. I put no money into the deal and shared neither profits nor losses.

I had served as the Mayor's Project Manager for the 300 acre Mission Bay Redevelopment project and Pacific Bell Ballpark, experiences that were of limited use in the development of a grocery store. But the vocabulary and broad categories of tasks—site assembly, real estate transactions, environmental review and entitlement, financing and design were remarkably similar. I had also served on the Planning Commission for four years, which was quite a bit more useful, primarily for giving me insights into what decision makers are looking for in projects and submittals.

Peterson Architects was chosen to design the project after winning an invited competition among four firms. We liked their design point of view and commitment to making a good pedestrian experience. We also retained a general contractor early in the process.

The owner/investor, the developer, the architect, and the contractor were all San Francisco residents. To give an idea of how atypical this is, I never met anyone working for Catellus, the Mission Bay developer, who lives in the City.





The competition project

After the fire,

neighbors deluged

the listing realtor

with petitions

–2,500 signatures–

with one message:

no chain store.

And, in fact, Walgreen's was keen on the site.

EVOLUTION

I inherited the program of grocery store, childcare, and underground parking. But the program changed pretty fast.

When we bought from the City the adjacent parcel, the Planning Director ordered that we provide the maximum number of housing units and the minimum amount of parking. Two of the housing units are to be affordable to low-income families, subsidized by the developer, under an exaction formula passed by the Board of Supervisors midstream. The formula calls for 10% of the units to be "affordable," and at fifteen units we had to round up.

Finding a grocer was more difficult than we had anticipated. As often happens, the grocer we selected, Sam Mogannam, came to our attention from a mutual friend he met at a dinner party. Sam and his brother Raphael grew up in the grocery business, having taken over the Bi-Rite grocery begun by their father and uncle at 18th Street between Guerrero and Dolores Streets. It's the kind of grocery with flowers out front, a deli counter, organic produce, pastries baked by the owner's wife, and a wide selection of affordable wines.

The project has a third component: a new branch library. In November 2000, voters passed Proposition A, a $106 million bond issue to finance the rehabilitation or replacement of inadequate branch libraries, with Glen Park's tiny 1,500 square foot branch at the top of the list. I suspected that dealing with the City bureaucracy would add a new level of complexity and brain damage to the process. But we felt that the inclusion of a library added panache to the project as well—and besides, my mother had been a librarian. After a lengthy community review process, the Library Commission in July 2002 approved recommending that the Board of Supervisors authorize the purchase of approximately 9,200 square feet in the project.

Negotiations with the library were long and difficult. One architect works for the Department of Public Works while another is a consultant, the City Real Estate Department has responsibility for the business transaction, the City Attorney's office sat at the table as the City's lawyer. Fortunately, the City Librarian, Susan Hildreth, herself took the lead with the Library Commission, community, and Board of Supervisors. Without her, we would have been stuck.

Most of the negotiating was about the extent of upgrades we would build for the library. In retrospect, we and the City both erred in not more clearly defining the elements we were selling the City. Allocation of costs and responsibility for design and financing of such items as heating/ventilation/air conditioning systems, fire sprinklers, bike racks, and even window cranks were hashed over endlessly. Typical of the difficulty of the negotiation was the City's requirement that we purchase earthquake insurance during the construction period. This insurance is very expensive and has such a high deductible that no private developer would bother with it. The structure of our arrangement with the City was that we build them a shell and then turn over the key, financing the construction and running the risks of overruns, delays, or earthquakes. But the City's Risk Manager was used to public works projects where the city contracts a builder to deliver a product and pays as it is built, triggering a raft of bidding, diversity, foreign policy, and wage burdens along with insurance requirements. The City agreed to a compromise: we would get earthquake insurance only if it were available at a commercially reasonable rate. But the City refused even to discuss a definition of commercially reasonable. The City wanted the benefits of a private developer taking the risk and fronting the money, while otherwise treating the project like a typical public works project.

From a grocery store with a childcare center and a story of underground parking, the project evolved to a grocery store with a library and housing above. While this made for a more interesting project and one with some hope of financial feasibility, the groundwork we had done to introduce the earlier proposal came back to haunt us. There was a sense of betrayal among some of the neighbors (and more particularly the merchants) over the loss of the previously proposed parking. When I explained at a merchants meeting the infeasibility of the underground parking, a shopkeeper said that feasibility was our problem, not theirs.

ENTITLEMENTS, OPPOSITION, AND SUPPORT

So we felt we had a pretty good project and team. The project was designed to meet the community's needs for a grocery (as evidenced by the petitions and resolutions), housing (responding to the Planning Department's mandate), and a library (as evidenced by the passage of the library bond and the Library Commission's action to buy from us). In fact, when a committee representing the Glen Park Association and Glen Park Merchants Association presented us with a document outlining their vision for the site, we responded by asking to recast it as a joint statement and signed on.

Now we needed environmental review, three conditional use permits (for a non-residential use above the first floor, a store larger than 4000 square feet, and any development of a lot larger than 10,000 square feet), and four variances, including one releasing us from the obligation to provide 14 parking spaces for the store and library. (All of the variances and one of the three conditional uses were trig-

gered by the library.)

We applied for the planning approvals in February 2002, and shortly after that the Planning Commission shut down because of an impasse between the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors on appointments. We frantically tried to get a hearing date before the Commission shut down on July 1. Instead, we fell into a five-month delay. During those five months, both opposition and support for the project grew.

By far the biggest issue was parking. We had underestimated the passion for the parking lot that the project would displace. The merchants wanted a lot for themselves—one of the project opponents wrote that, "an informal poll indicates that, at any given time, as many as fifteen to twenty spaces in the village are taken up, not by shoppers or residents, but by the employees of local businesses," and the *Glen Park News* reported that, "already, merchants set timers so they can remember to move their cars every two hours."

The Planning Department's environmental review staff required a traffic study. We had to hire (at about $50,000) traffic planners to apply the Department's methodology to assess likely parking demand. This methodology is based on suburban shopping habits and resulted in a finding that just about everyone going to the store or library would do so by car. The planners would not adjust the methodology to account for the existing library which would close, the five bus lines and regional BART station within a block, the City CarShare cars available to be borrowed in the lot next door, the home delivery planned by the store, or the neighborhood-serving nature of the uses proposed.

We learned that the Glen Park BART station is the only one in the system with unregulated on-street parking, so BART commuters drive in from the Peninsula or down from Diamond Heights, park on the street, and ride BART. According to the Planning Department, Downtown Glen Park has 183 spaces without meters or permit requirements. I brought the Director of the Department of Parking and Traffic out to meet with the Merchants Association and he agreed to a raft of measures proposed by the Glen Park Association and the Merchants. Meters, two-hour zones, and increased enforcement are being implemented. Did this help blunt opposition? Not in the least. In fact, they argued that increased parking turnover would decrease pedestrian safety.

The merchants believed that the vitality of the commercial district requires the parking lot. They didn't see that, overall, the addition of new attractions to the downtown —a neighborhood-serving grocery and library—would increase foot traffic to their stores. Nor were they flexible enough to accept that parking solutions could be off-site.

It became clear from the testimony and letters of supporters and opponents of the project that at root residents of Glen Park hold two different visions of the role of their neighborhood and its future. Two comments represent these divergent points of view:

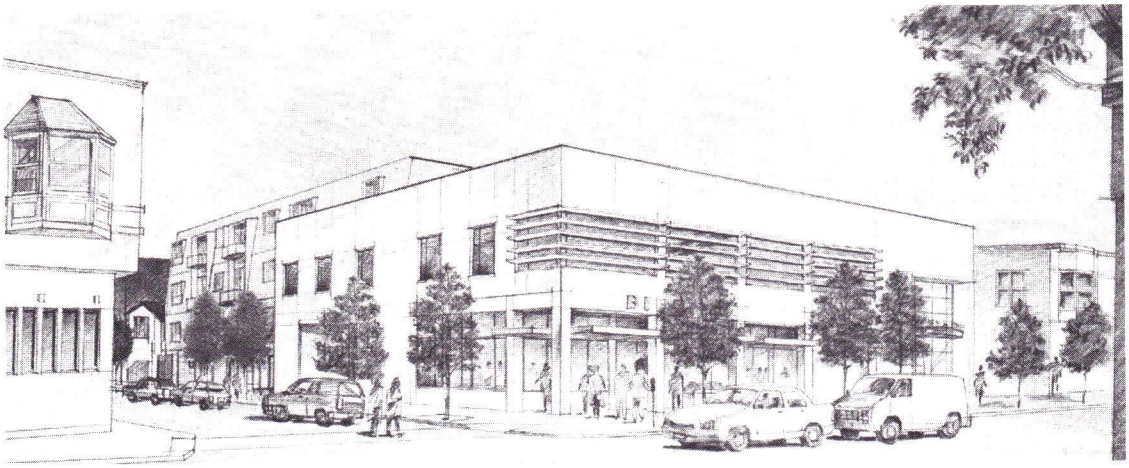
"We moved to the area because of many things it offered but mostly because of the BART station and village proximity and what the village had in the way of shops. I don't drive at all and do all my traveling on public transportation or by using my feet. The market that was in place before the fire was a large part of my daily schedule. It allowed me to get some fresh produce, small items and great stuff from the butcher shop without having to get a ride from a friend to a larger, characterless store. I grew up in Switzerland and London where this sort of way to shop, small amounts frequently, is much more commonplace."

"You are driving out Americans in favor of urbanites with politically correct lifestyles."

Some opponents resented my role as a former public official and thought that there must be some back room deals being made. This suspicion was echoed by the *Bay Guardian* in a piece entitled "Let Them Eat Books: Pro-development forces battle community interests over Glen Park branch library, condominium." It says, "Making matters worse was the fact that the Glen Park Marketplace is represented by David Prowler, a high-powered lobbyist who served as planning commissioner and economic development director for Mayor Willie Brown. Such a prominent political connection fueled speculation by project opponents that they were shut out of the planning process." This after fully *thirty* public meetings and hearings.

Some of the opponents objected to the height of the building, in part because project opponents posted doctored drawings of the project in storefront windows. At thirty feet in front and forty feet in the rear, the project height matches that of surrounding buildings. If the building looked like the doctored posters, I'd have opposed it myself.

From reading the *Bay Guardian,* one would conclude that "the community" hated the project. But how can you tell what "the community" wants? The Housing Action Coalition, the Executive Committee of the Glen Park Association, SPUR, the Bicycle Coalition, the Sierra Club, and scores of neighbors came to hearing after hearing to support the project. SPUR called it the "perfect project" and "a planner's dream." The *San Francisco Chronicle* said, "talk about a pro-



View south along Diamond Street

ject with San Francisco written all over it." When we had a booth at the Glen Park Festival, support and impatience for the project were almost unanimous.

Public hearings regarding different aspects of the project were held before the Public Utilities, Planning, Library, and Parking and Traffic Commissions. Each voted unanimously for the project. Opponents appealed to the Board of Supervisors, who also approved the project unanimously. Opponents then appealed to the Board of Permit Appeals, which held *three* separate hearings on the project, each about a month apart. The Vice President, Kathleen Harrington, not only voted against the project but also egged the opponents on to sue. (They did.) As she explained her vote in the *San Francisco Examiner*, she is "a pro-parking kind of gal."

These hearings required a tremendous amount of outreach—signs posted on the site, letter-writing campaigns, even a storefront open house with models, attended by project opponents as well as supporters and catered by Bi-Rite. The City Librarian arranged meetings with all the members of the Board of Supervisors willing to meet, and she, representatives from the neighborhood, Sam from Bi-Rite, and I made the rounds. Opponents did the same. Bevan Dufty, the local supervisor, and I sat for a Saturday afternoon in front of the site with a sign saying, "Talk to Us About the Marketplace Project." We had a booth at the Glen Park Festival and handed out 500 brochures, and I wrote update articles for each issue of the quarterly *Glen Park News,* delivered door-to-door to each household in the neighborhood. Nonetheless, at each hearing, without fail, we would hear testimony that the project was being slipped by the community without input or notice.

The opponents were real bulldogs. The day before the Supervisors hearing, I came to my office and found a swastika on the door. When I told a supervisor's aide that I doubted it was connected to the project, she told me that, based on the calls they were getting, I shouldn't kid myself.

We made it through the entitlement process and the appeals in April 2003—over a year after applying for permits—and I devoted my efforts to meeting with lenders, loan brokers, and insurance brokers. I must have interviewed a dozen of each. The lenders had a strong preference for residential condo units rather than rentals and some would not even consider loans on rentals. On the other hand, contractors, architects, and engineers are squeamish about condos because of the history of lawsuits. The project suffered a delay when our mechanical, electrical, and plumbing engineer walked off the job when we wouldn't indemnify him for everything forever, whether his fault or not.

From a financing perspective, it's pretty straightforward: you build a building with three elements, sell off the library and grocery portions, and then rent or sell off the housing units one by one. It was trickier to guess what sales prices or rents we could get at a point two years hence. I didn't like to root for high housing prices, but that's what it would take to get the thing to pencil out.

In any event, it was the drop in interest rates that kept the project alive. Our consultant, Marie Jones, performed constant financial analysis, and it was always a great pleasure to watch the feasibility look rosier and rosier as we got quoted lower rates. I was surprised by how dynamic the spreadsheets were—changing one assumption could make a really big difference in whether the project made any sense or not. And assumptions were always changing.

STUCK

By the spring of 2003, we were expecting a fall groundbreaking. The entitlements were in place, we had a grip on the insurance question, and construction financing at a great rate—4.45 with one point—had been found. We planned to break ground in October. Then the project hit three roadblocks.

The first blow was the decision by staff at the Planning Department, six months after the project was approved, that they didn't like the design. We didn't expect to get pages of comments six months after the Commission approval. According to the calls and memo we received from the department, no fewer than six planners had been discussing the design. We were asked to come in to discuss "just a few tweaks," which turned out to include removing structural columns holding up the library or removing the outdoor seating at the store, making the building front "less horizontal" (it is thirty feet tall and a hundred feet wide), and making the "very crisp" façade "consistent with the existing neighborhood"—a hodgepodge of Victorians with apartments or offices above small storefronts. We could not see why a building with a grocery on the first floor and a civic use on the second should mimic neighbors of such differing use. Until the planners are all satisfied with the design, no site permit.

The first blow was the decision by staff at the Planning Department, six months after the project was approved, that they didn't like the design. We didn't expect to get pages of comments six months after the Commission approval.

Then the owner, strapped for cash for another project, decided he had no choice but to sell the project. And until a new owner was found, cash outlays—all out of pocket—were to stop. No more engineering drawings, no lawyers to review the condo documents, no money to pay the architects to redesign to meet the Planning staff's objections, no movement on financing.

What really made sale hard was the lawsuit. A group called "Glen Park Neighborhood Group of Concerned Citizens" filed a suit at the last minute against the City for having certified the adequacy of the environmental review on the project. (The Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, and Board of Permit Appeals had all acted to uphold the environmental review—with the exception of the "pro-parking kind of gal," unanimously.) The lawyer for the petitioners was a recent member of the Bar, the owner of the video store across the street. At the mandatory settlement hearing, I asked what they would consider an acceptable compromise, what would they like to see built on that site in the center of their community. They were flummoxed—they knew for sure what they didn't want, but had no clue what would work for them.

For sale, sued, and without design sign-off, in late August the project was stalled.

LESSONS

Here are some things I learned:

- First, a big mistake: we shouldn't have gone public until the program was settled. It didn't matter how often we described our project once we had submitted the plans, some neighbors felt that we had pulled a bait and switch when we took out the underground parking. We had never sought any statements of support for the previous proposal, we had never submitted any applications for it—it didn't matter.

- We should have done more financial feasibility analysis right off the bat. But if the owner had done any such analysis, the project would not have happened, and it is likely that Walgreen's would have bought the site.

- Not everyone likes the idea of mixed-use development near transit. Particularly in a predominantly single-family neighborhood, multi-family housing isn't welcome, whether there are other uses in the building or not.

- Not everybody likes a public/private partnership, either. From the City's point of view, it required more flexibility and trust than they are used to. From the public's perception, the

partnership seemed suspicious. The *Bay Guardian* editorialized that "it might set a precedent for more public/private partnerships and for more such suspect ways for private business to nibble away or steal outright a valuable public asset." From a developer's point of view, a partnership with the City requires patience, an understanding of complex decision-making dynamics, and the stomach for a very public process.

- Much of the fate of the project hinged on externalities. Some examples:
  - During the course of planning the project, construction loan interest rates came down from 7.5% to 4.45%. Thanks to the drop in rates, the project will make money, though not the kind of return most investors would be satisfied with. At the same time, it is the drop in residential mortgage rates that has enabled housing prices to defy gravity to this point and remain buoyant despite job and population loss. If interest rates spike when the housing is completed, sales prices will of course drop.
  - Nobody could have foreseen that the Planning Commission and Board of Permit Appeals would shut down for five months because of a dispute between the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors.
  - The sale of the project and the hiatus on project spending were caused not by anything intrinsic to the project, but by the owner's need for cash for another project. And this need for cash was a result of the crash of the stock market.
  - Even the war in Iraq has had an impact. Due to increased military demand, the price of lumber has just about doubled.

- The vehemence of the opposition took us by surprise. They organized letter writing campaigns, public testimony, and lobbying. They wrote letters to the editor, posted posters in shop windows, called me names on the street ("neighborhood wrecker," for example), and filed a lawsuit. They threw up objections based on the process, on suspected toxics, on pedestrian safety, parking, the process, zoning, traffic, height, loading, and the size of the store.

- And one thing I had learned in my years on the Planning Commission came back to me: you can't solve psychological problems with land use decisions.

- I still ask myself whether the project team should have met more often with the opponents, or even involved a mediator like Community Boards. Should we have tried harder to explain why they couldn't get what they wanted—a new library and grocery—without loss of the parking and the inclusion of housing? I doubt it would have helped, but it nags me.
- The size of the project was a real challenge—too big to slip under the radar, too small to absorb all the fixed costs of environmental review, legal fees, design, elevators, and time, which would be about the same for a project triple the size.

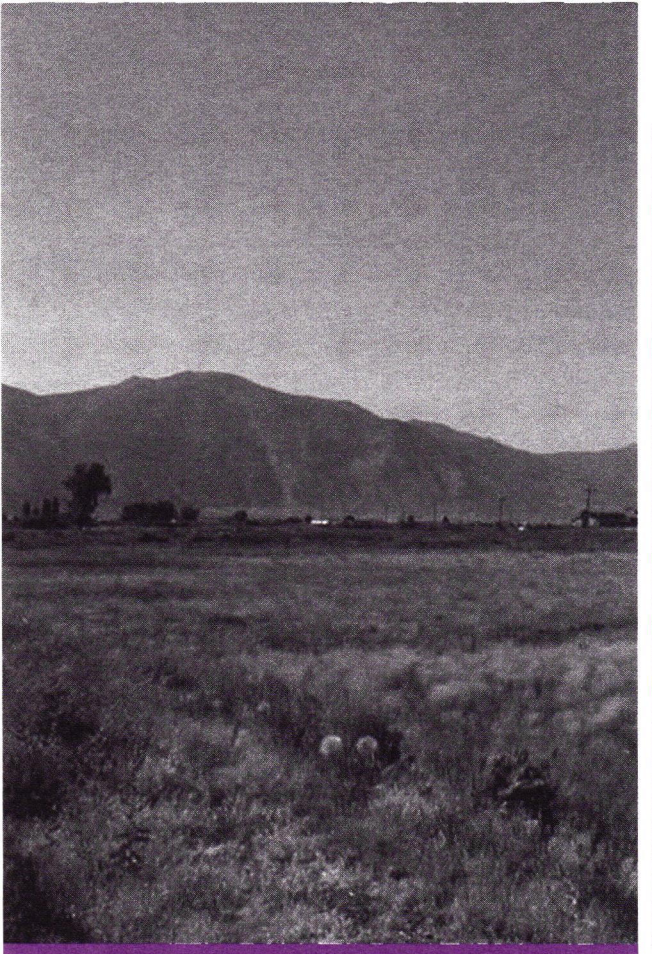
- It's important to keep clear about the goals of the development and to revisit them from time to time. It may seem apparent that the goal is to make money and move on; the reality is more complex. The developer has to weigh speed, risk, complexity, quality, and the desire to create a neighborhood-enhancing legacy. In this case, all but the legacy goal would have justified dropping the library out of the program.

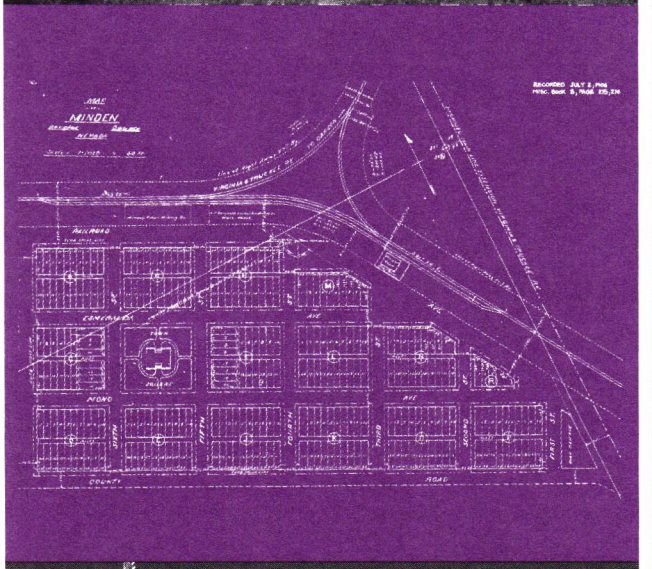
- I'll take the blame for pushing the envelope of the design. I wanted a clean, modernist building, one with high-quality materials but which looks like what it is—a building built at the beginning of the 21st century to contain a grocery, library, and housing. I brought Peterson Architects loads of architecture books with yellow stickies showing buildings or parts of buildings I liked. I brought dozens of photos of new Dutch architecture. I should have paid more attention to what the neighbors, planners, and housing market want. When a city planner said that the building design looks like a factory in Holland, it was meant as a criticism.

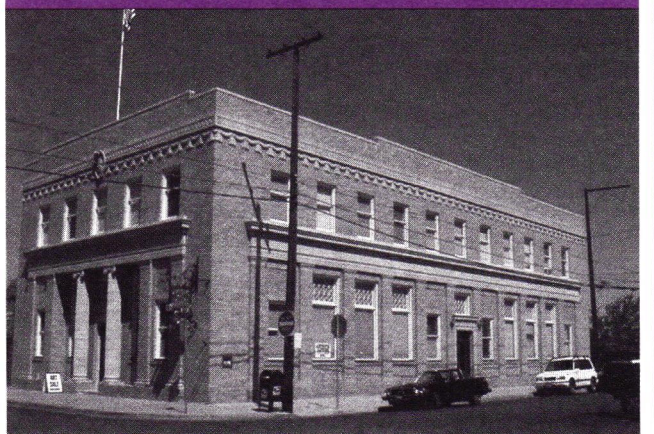
- More surprising to me was what in some cases appeared to be the lackluster engagement of City staff. Response times were lengthy. Although the Planning staff and Commission were supportive of the goals of a library, market, and housing, the conceptual support often didn't translate into any apparent interest in actually moving the project along. At the last minute, an anonymous Planner went to Supervisor Aaron Peskin, alleging that the Planning Department had somehow screwed up the review of the proposal, causing a three week delay in the library sale. I came to realize just how spoiled I had been when I worked in the Mayor's Office managing the ballpark and Mission Bay. Big projects, with big developers and the Mayor's personal engagement, got a great deal of departmental discipline.

CONCLUSION

The lawsuit has been dropped. In October, the project was sold to a loft developer who chose not to extend my contract. Peterson Architects are off the job. But the builder who bought the project hoped to break ground by May. ◉







Minden's Architect-for-Life

Bruce A. Race, FAIA, AICP

Founded by H. F. Dangberg in 1905, Minden, Nevada, was designed to reflect the city plan of Minden, Germany. While not a "copy" of its German namesake, it does emulate its basic spirit as a small scale and walkable village. In no small way, Minden's character is also a tribute to a Reno architect who spent thirty years designing the town's buildings.

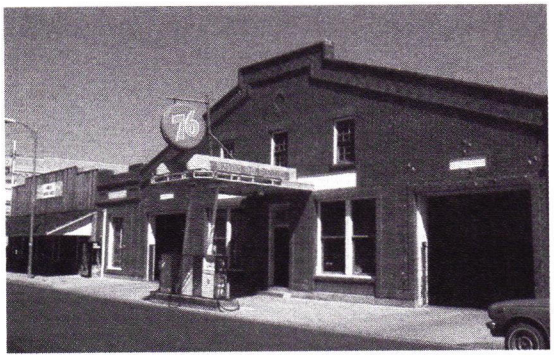
DANGBERG'S DOLLHOUSE TOWN

Perched on a small rise surrounded by wetlands, Minden is a rural, agricultural town in Nevada's Carson Valley, framed by a heroic backdrop of mountains and pastures. The town was developed to serve H. L. Dangberg's ranching and farming operations in the valley. Dangberg was instrumental in bringing the Virginia & Truckee Railroad to Carson Valley to provide access to his regional markets. In 1905, he prepared the original plat map for Minden. This plan indicated a small "main street" community with areas for commercial, residential, and public uses. It subdivided the town into 250' x 225' blocks with fifteen-foot wide alleys and 25' x 105' lots. The plan, which identified a town square and the locations of public buildings, featured ten and a half blocks of residential, three blocks of commercial, and one and a half blocks of public uses. A ten-block expansion to the west, including the Douglas County Courthouse, was undertaken in 1915.

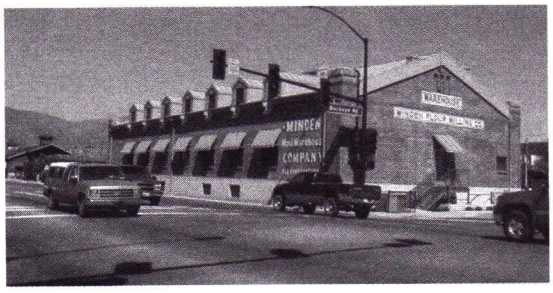
ARCHITECT FOR LIFE

Frederic DeLongchamps (1862-1969), a renowned and prolific Reno architect, designed buildings throughout the West. Among them are the significant buildings of Minden, including the Minden Flour Company (1906), Carson Valley Improvement Club Hall, Douglas County Courthouse (1915), Minden Inn (1912), Farmer's Bank of Carson Valley, Dangberg Land and Livestock Company (1915), and Minden Butter Manufacturing Company.

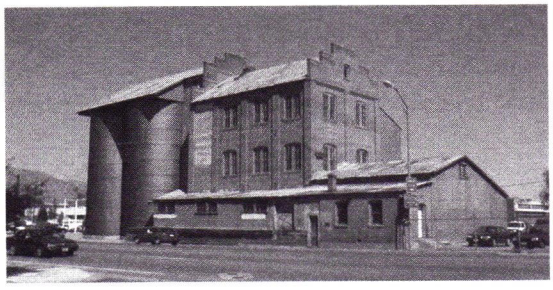
No other city in Nevada has been so thoroughly at the hand of a single architect. DeLongchamps's mastery of designing in a variety of styles and building types is trumped only by his ability to capture a small town's aspirations. Each building makes a contribution to the town's streets and formal places, while reflecting its economic purpose. Minden looks like it has one of everything because of the talent of its architect-for-life. ◉



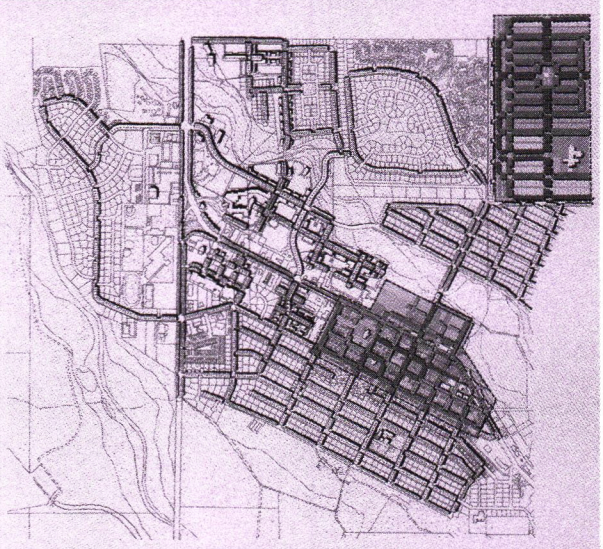
Minden Gas Station



Minden Company



Minden Mill



Minden Plan for Prosperity, 2002

PLANNING FOR PROSPERITY

Dangberg and DeLongchamps created a walkable town in a rural place that is valued by residents. The character of the town and the natural setting were identified as its most prized assets during workshops that resulted in the Minden Plan for Prosperity, adopted by the Douglas County Commissioners in 2002.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Minden had experienced generic suburban subdivision and strip development, which greatly—and adversely—affected the small town's pastoral context. The community wanted a plan that acknowledged economic opportunity but grew from their own town planning traditions. The community wanted investment to be "more Minden-like."

The Minden Plan for Prosperity provides a blueprint for the next generation of development according to a more familiar pattern. The design elements replicate and extend Minden's block patterns and the texture of traditional neighborhoods. There is an emphasis on infill development and continued investment in the downtown at a compatible scale, while protecting Minden's rural setting. ◉

For more on the life and work of Frederic DeLongchamps, visit http://www.library.unr.edu/specoll/delong.html.

Under the Radar

Ocean Beach People's Organic Food Market

Project Team:

Architect: ARCHITECTS hanna gabriel wells
(Jim Gabriel, Randy Hanna, Matt Wells, Vince Stroop, Anja Aigner, Rika Alavi, Adrienne Gabriel)

Structural Engineer: KPFF Consulting Engineers
(Eric Lehmkuhl)

Green Building Products: Lynn Froeschle, AIA

Electrical: ILA+Zammitt Engineers (Keith Thompson)

Mechanical: McParlane and Associates (Genko Ganev)

Energy Analysis: Brummitt Engineering (Beth Brummitt)

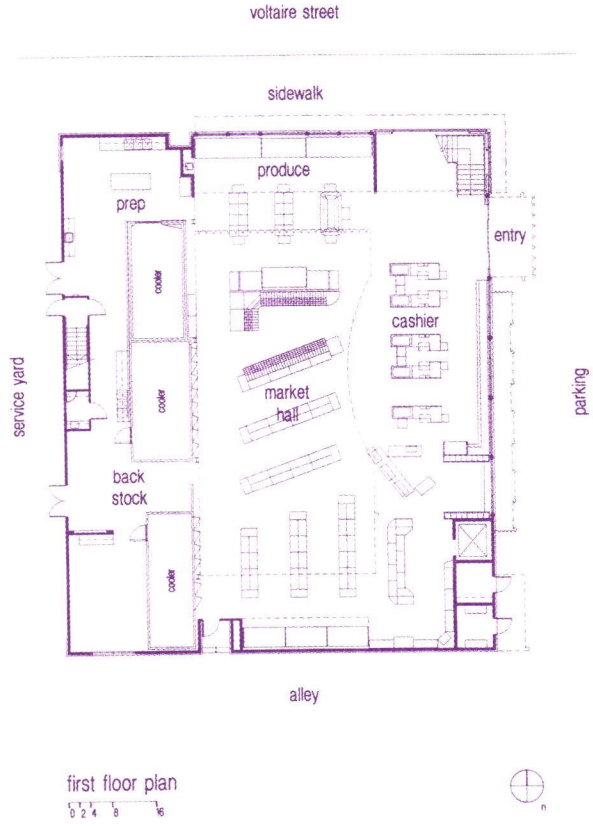
Environmental Consultant: Jim Bell

General Contractor: Peterbuilt Corporation

Project Photography: Hewitt and Garrison Photography

O. B. People's Market was established in 1976 as a co-op and has maintained itself in the community as a place for activism, alternative health, and organic food. The existing site, along Voltaire Street, is within a diverse collection of small-scale commercial businesses. The new store fits well within the neighborhood, providing needed services at an appropriate community scale. The new 13,000 square foot store includes space for general grocery, check-out, stock rooms, delivery yard, walk-in coolers, administrative offices, kitchen, deli, meeting rooms and on-site parking for 36-cars.

Spaces are arranged around a large, open market hall, which allows customers and employees to stay visually connected and encourages interaction. The building uses products that have low environmental impact and/or take advantage of long life cycle. It maximizes the use of daylight and natural ventilation (no air conditioning), limiting energy consumption. The building offsets its energy demands by the use of a 30 kilowatt photo-voltaic grid on the roof (additional panels are planned to cover parking areas). Overall, the building outperforms the minimum Title 24 requirements by 35.3%. ◉



first floor plan

0 2 4 8 16

Predictability: Does the flap of a butterfly's wings in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas?

Controlling

AIA California Council | *AIA National Practice Management Knowledge Community*

2004 Desert Practice Conference

Save the Date

October 29–31, 2004
Renaissance Esmeralda Resort
Indian Wells, CA 92210

chaos

Controlling Chaos: From evolving methods of project delivery to shifting demographics to the elusive influences of globalization and technology, significant changes are affecting the local, national and global design and construction environment. The magnitude and pace of these changes are creating a chaos that can challenge even the most solid of practices.

This conference seeks to identify key challenges to the successful practice of architecture and provide insights, dynamic discussions, and practical applications for addressing them in your own practice. The program will explore four themes: Economy vs. Ecology, Globalization & Technology, Creators & Builders, and Context & Strategy. Led by a nationally recognized faculty, with interactive sessions, panel discussion, networking opportunities, marketplace exhibitors and exciting special events, this conference is a great resource!

Satellite Image of Hurricane used to visualize Edward Lorenz's example of Chaos Theory
MISR Views Hurricane Carlotta, NASA/GSFC/JPL, MISR Science Team
Satellite: Terra Sensor: MISR (06/21/2000)

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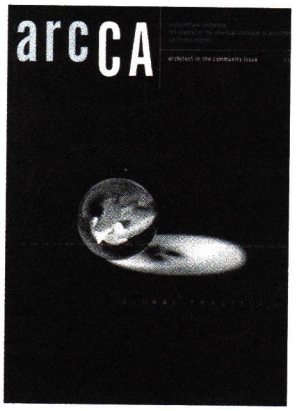

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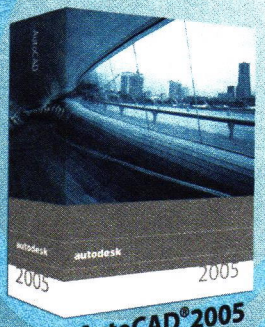

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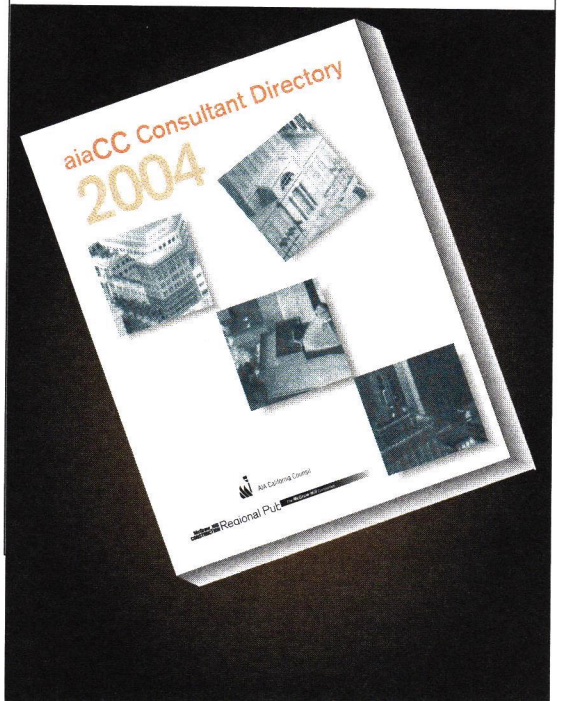

Credits

cover: typographic illustration, **Bob Aufuldish**
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page 12: all photos, **MS&R**
page 14: (from left to right), rendering, **CCS Architecture;** drawing, **Mark Primack Architect;** drawing, **David Baker + Partners Architects;** drawing, **Eve Reynolds Architect;** rendering, **Boone/Low Architects and Planners;** rendering, **Peterson Architects;** rendering, **SixEight Design**
page 16: (left to right and top to bottom) photo, **Bruce A. Race, FAIA, AICP**
rendering, **Boone/Low Architects and Planners;** drawing, **Boone/Low Architects and Planners**
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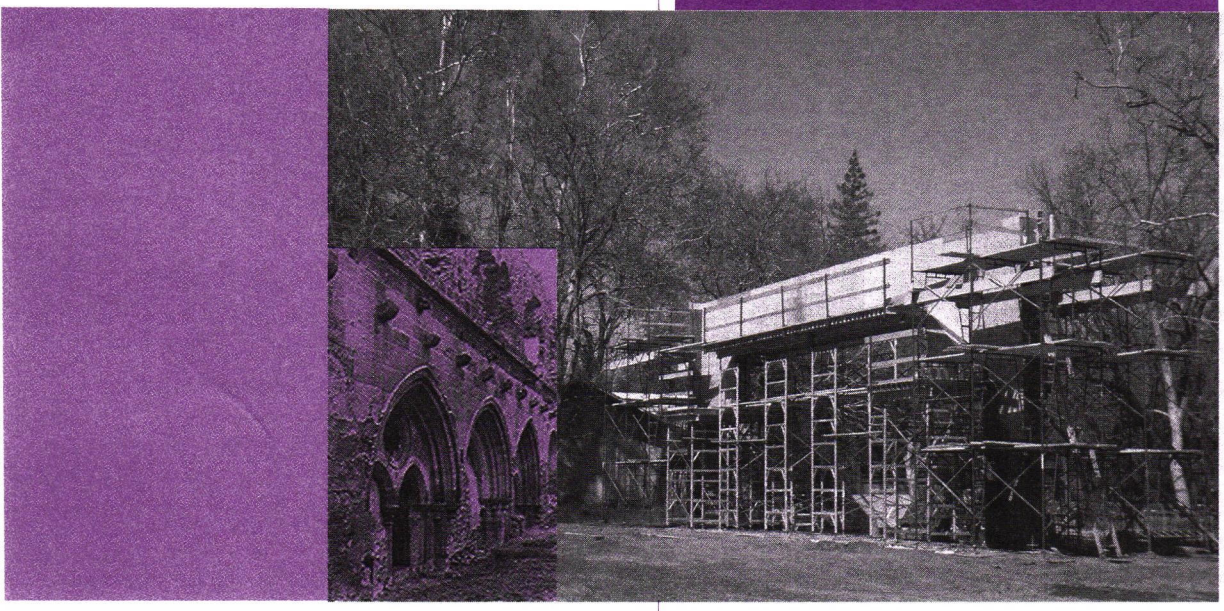
page 48: photos, **courtesy of The Monks of New Clairvaux.**

Coda



The Sacred Stones

The Monks of New Clairvaux

In 1181, at the request of King Alfonso VIII of Castile, Cistercian monks arrived in Trillo, Guadalajara, a town some 80 miles northeast of Madrid, Spain, to establish the Abbey of Santa Maria de Ovila. It was to function as a permanent establishment in a chain of outposts that would help settle and maintain the territory that Alfonso had recently reconquered from the Moors. The monks lived at Ovila for more than 600 years, until a decree of the government of Maria Christina suppressed all small monasteries around 1835. Sold to a wealthy family, the abbey eventually fell into disrepair while used as sundry farm buildings.

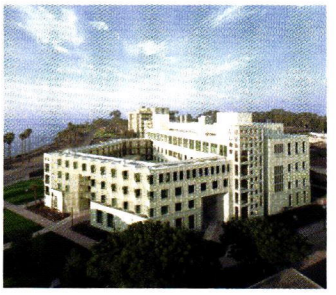
In 1931, William Randolph Hearst purchased parts of Ovila, including the entire Chapter House—which was constructed between 1190 and 1220—dismantled the stones, and shipped them to the United States. Hearst intended to use the stones to construct a swimming pool and bowling alley at his Wyntoon Castle on the McCloud River in Northern California. Financial problems led him instead to donate the stones to the City of San Francisco in return for a cancelled debt. The City moved the stones to Golden Gate Park, where they fell victim to a series of fires, theft, and vandalism that destroyed the identifying numbers that provided the code to reconstruct the Chapter House.

The Abbey of New Clairvaux, a community of Trappist-Cistercian monks living in the fertile Sacramento Valley of Northern California, acquired the Chapter House stones in 1994, after more than thirty years of attempts.

Master stonemason Oskar Kempf and his associate, Ross Leuthard, have surveyed the stones and are using computer imaging to determine their placement. They will refurbish existing stones, test them for strength, and carve the missing stones. Patrick Cole, AIA, principal architect, is preparing the site master plan, design development drawings, and outline specifications for the Chapter House, cloisters, and new Abbey Church. Soroush Gharhamani is the project manager for the Chapter House restoration, with Carl F. Meyer, AIA, as consulting architect. Phil Sunseri of the Sunseri Associates, Inc., Chico/Sacramento, is preparing to undertake the reconstruction.

The Chapter House will be reassembled according to strict ratios of Cistercian architecture. Once rebuilt, the Santa Maria de Ovila Chapter House will be the oldest freestanding building west of New York, and one of only three examples of Cistercian Gothic architecture in the United States. By agreement with the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the Chapter House and an archival library will be open to the public, free of charge, during specified hours. ◉

For more information, visit http://personalweb.sunset.net/~trappist/sacred_stones.htm.



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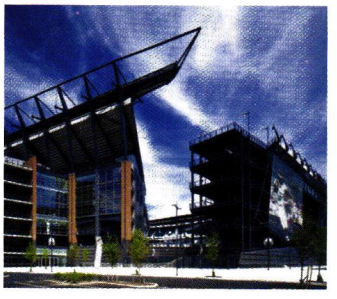
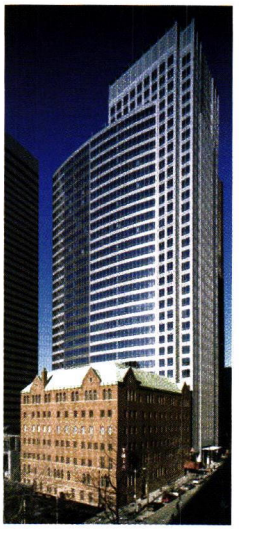


Lincoln Financial Field

Martin Luther King, Jr. Library



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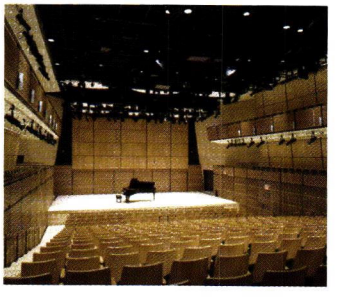

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90-000:4	Bidding or Negotiation Phase	13	$2,600.00	11	$130.00	$156.00
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